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APRIL, 1954

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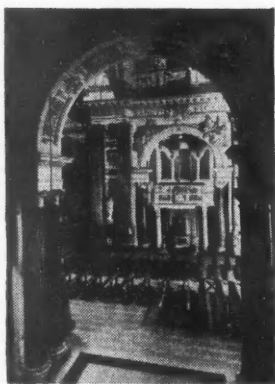
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The CLERGY REVIEW

NEW SERIES VOL. XXXIX No. 4 APRIL 1954

IS THEIR BAPTISM REALLY NECESSARY?

II

ATTENTION has been called to the weight of evidence from the second to the seventh century which shows that the Church believed that infants dying unbaptized are excluded from the kingdom of heaven. The Pelagians were very keen in distinguishing between what was of faith and what was merely theological deduction and hence a matter of legitimate difference of opinion. They held that the existence of transmitted sin was merely theological deduction and not part of the faith¹; but never once did they even remotely suggest that there could be differences of opinion about the exclusion of unbaptized infants from heaven. For this reason the Councils of Carthage and of Milevis had no need to include this in their condemnations of Pelagianism, since it was not denied by the Pelagians.

To give further evidence might seem superfluous, for it is difficult to credit a suggestion that the whole Church could be mistaken for some five hundred years about a matter which can be known only from revelation. Nevertheless, since the claim has been made that the Church has never taught the exclusion of unbaptized infants from heaven as anything more than a theological opinion, it is needful to consider the subsequent evidence, which it will be convenient to treat systematically thus:

1. Evidence that the Church's practice of baptizing infants immediately if in danger of death, and of obliging laymen to baptize them, was founded upon the belief that such infants if unbaptized do not go to heaven.
2. Evidence arising from the traditional interpretation of the text of John 3, 5: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."
3. Evidence arising from awareness of the difficulties against God's goodness in the exclusion of infants from heaven. This

¹ Cf. *De Gestis Pelagii*, 6, 16, CV 32, p. 69; and *De Peccato Originali*, 21, 25, CV 32, p. 182.

evidence shows that a sharp distinction was always drawn between the lot of those dying only in original sin and of those dying in unrepented personal sin; and, from the eleventh century onwards, a consideration of the question of the effects of original sin led to a realization that the only penalty suffered by these infants is exclusion from the beatific vision, and a clearer formulation of that conviction.

1. The question of the fate of unbaptized infants affected the practice of the Church; and in this it differed from other questions, such as, for instance, the number of the damned, or the procession of the Holy Ghost. The practice of baptizing infants and adults immediately if there was danger of death, and of obliging laymen to baptize them, was explicitly founded upon the belief that Baptism—always understanding Baptism as meaning the application of water and an invocation of the Trinity—was absolutely the only means by which infants can be admitted to heaven. St Leo the Great, *d.* 461, in his letter to the Bishops of Sicily, explained why Baptism was usually conferred at Easter and Pentecost, but added that in danger of death from sickness, siege, persecution, shipwreck, it must be conferred at any time, since no one must be denied “this singular remedy”.¹ This decree is the source of Canon 771, which prescribes that Baptism in cases of necessity must be administered at any time or place.² The letter attributed to Pope Siricius, *d.* 398, but probably composed in the sixth century, appears in the collection of Papal letters called the *Dionysiana*, was regarded as authoritative and was sent to Pepin and Charlemagne as normative of the practice of the Church.³ This letter manifestly implies that anyone who died without “the sacred font” would lose both the kingdom and eternal life.⁴

This prescription is a faithful echo of Tertullian, Cyprian,

¹ *Ep.* 16, MPL 54, 701; some codices have “praesidium” instead of “remedium”.

² Cf. Gasparri's list of sources in *Codex Iuris Canonici . . . Fontium Annotatione . . . ab Emo. Petro Card. Gasparri auctus*, Romae, 1917, p. 222, note 3.

³ Cf. Paul Fournier, *Histoire des Collections Canoniques en Occident*, Paris, 1931, p. 24, 36, 94-98.

⁴ “Sicut sacram ergo paschalem reverentiam in nullo dicimus minuendam, ita infantibus qui necdum loqui potuerunt, vel his quibus in qualibet necessitate opus fuerit sacri unda baptismatis, omni volumus celeritate succurri, ne ad nostram tendat perniciem animarum, si negato desiderantibus fonte salutari, exiens unusquisque de saeculo et regnum perdat et vitam.” *Ep. ad Himerium*, MPL 13, 1135.

St Augustine and St Gregory of Nazianzus.¹ Pope Gregory II, writing about the year 739 to the Thuringian converts of St Boniface, says that Baptism must be administered at Easter and Pentecost, "except in cases where there is danger of death", when Baptism must be administered at once, "lest they perish in eternity".² This letter, with its warning about perishing in eternity, entered the canonical collections of Burchard of Worms, *d.* 1075, and of Ives of Chartres, *d.* 1115, and appears in the famous *Decretum* of Gratian, finished about 1140.³ The *Capitula* of Theodulph of Orleans, of the ninth century, warns priests that if an infant dies unbaptized, the priest responsible must answer for its soul.⁴ Lanfranc of Canterbury, writing about 1080, says "the canons prescribe that in cases of necessity even a layman may baptize".⁵ St Thomas in the *Commentary on the Sentences* says that Baptism ought not to be delayed "because infants can easily die and be damned, and hence to avoid the danger of damnation they ought to be baptized as soon as they conveniently can be".⁶ In the *Summa*, written 1272-1273, he repeats that Baptism should not be deferred "because of the danger of death, for no other remedy is available for them besides the sacrament of Baptism, whereas adults have a remedy in the desire for Baptism".⁷

The Council of Florence, in its Decree for the Jacobites, February 1442, declares that Baptism must not be put off for forty or eighty days, as was the custom of some, and gives as the reason in the case of infants "the danger of death, which can often happen, for there is no other remedy available to them except the sacrament of Baptism, which delivers them from the power of the demon and makes them adopted sons of God".⁸ The Council affirms a universal principle: there is no other remedy save Baptism; and took its wording from St Thomas "non potest eis alio remedio subveniri". The presumption is

¹ Cf. references in previous article.

² "Ne in aeternum pereant"; MPL 89, 503 A.

³ Friedberg, I, p. 1367, although the letter of Gregory II is attributed to Pope Gelasius.

⁴ MPL 104, 196: "noverit se ille qui eum non baptizavit pro eius anima rationem redditurum".

⁵ *Ep.* 33, MPL 150, 332.

⁶ D. 4, Q. 3, a. 1, q. 2; he cites Gratian, *De Consec.* 4, chs. 16 and 17.

⁷ P. 3, Q. 68, a. 3.

⁸ Denz. 712.

that the Council intended to affirm the doctrine expressed by St Thomas, which unquestionably was the common doctrine in the Church at the time. The Decree for the Jacobites may not, indeed, be infallible, but it clearly shows what the Church at that time believed.¹

In missionary countries, where scarcity of priests and frequency of death among infants gives special point to the question of administering Baptism, the practice of the Church has been based upon the same belief. In 1841 the Provincial Synod of Korea decreed: "It is surely prudent to baptize infants within three days; but, lest so necessary a sacrament be delayed too long with danger to salvation, we prescribe that Baptism be not delayed more than eight days after birth." The Congregation De Propaganda Fide approved this decree and accepted it as a norm in other cases.² In 1780 Chinese missionaries raised the question of making an incision in a dead mother, in order to baptize the living infant; and represented the extreme difficulty of the case, due to the repugnance of the Chinese, lack of skill among midwives, and the danger of calumny. The Holy Office, 15 February 1780, answered that missionaries must warn their converts of the sad fate of infants who die unbaptized, and of the obligation in charity to baptize them, and added that it is contrary to reason and to charity, from mistaken consideration for the dead mother, to condemn the living infant to eternal death.³

More recently Pius XII in his Address to the Italian Catholic Union of Midwives, 29 October 1951, expressed the same belief. He said:

"All that We have said about the protection and care of natural life is with even greater reason true of the supernatural

¹ On the authority of the Council of Florence, cf. the considered judgement of Canon G. D. Smith, in *THE CLERGY REVIEW*, vol. XXXIII, 1950, pp. 217 ff. It seems that only those tend to decry its authority who dislike its doctrine on theoretical ground.

² Cf. *Collectanea*, n. 536, p. 218.

³ "Illud potius rationi absonum, atque ab omni pietate remotum, pro inani quadam integritate pudoreque servando defunctae genetrici, viventem natum aeternae morti addicere. Certe non modestia, non virtus, unde tanta profluit malum." *Collectanea*, n. 573; and cf. nn. 502, 566, 571, 574, 611, in all of which it is taken for granted, as the basis of practical decision, that unbaptized infants lose heaven.

life, which the new-born child receives with Baptism. In the present dispensation there is no other means of communicating this life to the child, who has not yet the use of reason. And yet the state of grace in the moment of death is absolutely necessary for salvation: without it supernatural happiness, the beatific vision of God, cannot be attained. In an adult an act of love may suffice to obtain him sanctifying grace and so supply for the lack of Baptism; to the child still unborn, or newly born, this way is not open. If therefore we remember that charity towards our neighbour obliges us to assist him in case of necessity; that this obligation is the graver and more urgent according to the greatness of the good to be procured or the evil to be avoided, and according to the inability of the needy one to help himself; then it is easy to understand the importance of providing for the Baptism of a child, devoid of the use of reason, and in grave danger or even certainty of death."¹

This *Allocutio* of Pius XII dealt with many problems connected with obstetrics, and affirmed Catholic teaching about them, notably sterilization, abortion and the "safe period". It was manifestly intended to be an assertion of Catholic teaching, and its words seem to have been weighed with pertinence to existing views. The *Allocutio* was delivered at a date when there had been recently in several countries considerable discussion about the possibility of salvation for unbaptized infants; and it would be rash to think that the Holy Father spoke in ignorance of the situation. This, however, apart, the pronouncement of the Holy Father is a faithful reflection of the mind of the Church since the second century. Pius XII might have been quoting the Council of Florence, just as that Council quoted St Thomas, who in turn quoted St Leo: just as St Leo was implicitly quoting St Augustine, St Gregory of Nazianzus and St Cyprian. This suggestion had been made: "We must take the safer course; and as we do not know for sure what happens to unbaptized babies, we must take all possible means to secure Baptism for them." The suggestion does not easily accord with the explicit statements of the Fathers, Councils, nor with the explicit words of the Holy Father, who says: "nella presente economia non vi

¹ *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, 20 Dec. 1951, p. 841; tr. Canon G. D. Smith, *THE CLERGY REVIEW*, Dec. 1951, p. 385.

è altro mezzo per comunicare questa vita al bambino". The Council of Florence is equally explicit: "*cum ipsis non possit alio remedio subvenir nisi per sacramentum baptismi*".¹

The Holy Father affirms the obligation of baptizing infants in danger of death, and he justifies that obligation by invoking the doctrinal principles involved. He says:

(a) There is no means save Baptism by which supernatural life can be communicated to infants.

(b) Infants have not the use of reason. (The relative clause is clearly affirmative, not limitative or hypothetical.)

(c) Sanctifying grace is absolutely necessary at the moment of death, and without it there is no possibility of supernatural happiness, which is the beatific vision.

(d) Infants, unlike adults, cannot make an act of charity; that is, cannot have Baptism of desire.

(e) This impossibility applies to infants whether in the womb or newly born.

Does it not seem that such language was chosen, not merely to give general support to the traditional teaching in the Church but to reaffirm it and to exclude anything else? The conclusion seems inescapable that all who have the responsibility of teaching the faithful are perfectly safe in using the same language as the Holy Father; nay, more, that they are reprehensible if they use any other, or if they fail to inculcate the necessity of Baptism upon exactly the same ground as the Holy Father. The subject about which the Holy Father spoke most certainly pertains both to faith and to morals; he was speaking, it is true, only to a group, but the declaration he made has general application.

2. Evidence arising from the interpretation of John 3, 5: "Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."

In the West, it is to be expected that St Augustine's interpretation would be generally accepted, and the expectation is realized. St Isidore of Seville is typical: "Infants if they pass away before regeneration without doubt are strangers to the kingdom, by the witness of our Saviour Himself, Who said,

¹ Denz. 712.

'Unless a man,' etc."¹ The Venerable Bede, *d.* 735, declares that our Saviour, with reference to infants, "terribiliter sed salubriter clamat, *Nisi quis*, etc."² The phrase was quoted by Peter Lombard in his famous *Book of the Sentences*, finished about 1150, the standard text-book in theology until it was superseded by St Thomas' *Summa* in the sixteenth century. Bede's phrase is quoted by several other theologians at the end of the eleventh century, for instance, by Simon of Tournai, *d.* 1219,³ Gandulph, *d.* 1160,⁴ and Alan of Lille, *d.* 1202.⁵ Pope Innocent III, in 1201, understood the text in the same sense,⁶ and the great theologians of the thirteenth century followed the traditional interpretation; so St Bonaventure⁷; and St Thomas argues from the text to the existence of original sin, for no one is excluded from the kingdom of God except for some sin.⁸

In the fourteenth century Wycliff, *d.* 1384, understood the text as meaning only that it is needful to be redeemed by Christ; the "water" in the text means the water which flowed from the side of Christ upon the Cross and symbolizes the redemption. He adds that he does not see why Christ could not spiritually baptize a child,⁹ and that absolutely speaking material water is not necessary for salvation, as the merit of Christ and the water which flowed from His side are enough.¹⁰ Against him Thomas Netter, O. Carm., *d.* 1430, more frequently called Waldensis, from Saffron Walden where he was born, the confessor of Henry V and the *doctor praestantissimus*, alleges both the text of John and Augustine's interpretation.¹¹ Wycliff had said that St Augustine was speaking only *reputative*, that is, merely giving an

¹ *De Eccl. Off.* 2, 9, MPL 83, 822, and cf. *Sent.* 1, 22, MPL col. 588. It is scarcely necessary to give references to the multitude of passages in which Augustine interprets the text, cf. v.g. *De Pec. Mer. et Rem.* 20, 20; *Ep.* 94, 7, 31; *Sermo* 294, 8.

² *Hom. 10 in Fest. Circum.*, MPL 94, 54; and cf. *In Luc.*, 1, 2, MPL 92, 337, where he repeats the "terribiliter sed salubriter".

³ Cf. A. Landgraf, *Kindertaufe und Glaube*, Gregorianum, 1928, p. 536.

⁴ *Sent.*, ed. de Walter, Vindobonae, 1924, p. 395.

⁵ *Liber contra Haereses* 1, 42, MPL 210, 347.

⁶ *Denz.* 410.

⁷ *Sermo* 2, ed. Quaracchi, 5, 544, and *Com. in Ioan.*, 3, 8, *ibid.* 279.

⁸ *Contra Gent.* 4, 50.

⁹ *Triologus*, 4, 11.

¹⁰ *Sermo* 6, ed. Johann Loserth, Wycliff Society, vol. 3 of sermons, London, 1889, p. 42.

¹¹ Thomae Waldensis Carmelitae Anglici, *Antiquitatum Fidei Catholicae Ecclesiae Doctrinale*, ed. Blanciotti, Venetiis, 1758, bk. 2, cap. 96, p. 564, a chapter of exceptional interest with regard to Baptism.

opinion, and conditionally, that is, if God did not will otherwise; Netter retorts that St Augustine was defining a matter which he considered to be of faith, and cites several passages to prove it, notably the assertion that no Christian would allow it to be said that unbaptized infants go to the kingdom of heaven.¹

In the sixth and seventh sessions of the Council of Trent, in January and February 1547, the theological commission had before it various statements of heretical doctrine about justification, the sacraments and particularly Baptism. Among them was Luther's assertion that Baptism was the same as Penance, since the sacrament without faith does not justify, whereas faith without the sacrament does justify.² Whether because of these statements of Luther, or because of statements of Calvin, whose *Institutiones* were first published in 1536, and again in 1539, the Council condemned anyone "who says that true and natural water is not necessary in Baptism and that therefore the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, 'Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost,' are to be reduced to a kind of metaphor".³ This Canon, whether directed against Luther or Calvin, tells heavily against any suggestion that the text is merely an affirmation that the grace of Baptism is necessary, and not actual baptism in water with the Trinitarian formula.⁴

The Council of Trent, in its Decree on Justification, 13 January 1547, said that the passing from the state of being a child of the first Adam to the state of grace, after promulgation of the Gospel, "cannot take place without the bath of regeneration, or desire of it—*sine lavacro regenerationis aut eius voto*—as it is written, 'Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.'"⁵ The "votum" is not said to be a personal act; but as it was always thus understood by the theologians who used the term, the presumption is that the Council also understood it in this sense. It is sig-

¹ Ibid., n. 7, p. 568; he cites *De Pec. Mer. et Rem.* 1, 18, 23, CV 60, p. 22, and 3, 5, 7, CV 60, p. 46.

² Cf. nn. 4 and 6 of the heretical propositions, Eheses, vol. 5, Friburgi Bresgoviae, 1911, p. 837.

³ Denz. 858.

⁴ This suggestion was made by H. Vosen, *Der Katholicismus und die Einsprüche seiner Gegner*, Freiburg, 1866, according to Fr Lennerz, *De Sacramento Baptismi* Romae, 1948, p. 108.

⁵ Denz. 796.

nificant that the Franciscan, Andrew de Vega, who helped to draw up this Decree, alleges it against Cajetan. The Council likewise, in the Decree on Original Sin, 17 June 1546, defined that infants "derive original sin from Adam, which must be —*necesse sit*—remitted by the bath of regeneration for the attainment of eternal life".¹ The reference here is clearly to the Pelagian idea that unbaptized infants go to eternal life but not to the kingdom of God, and hence can only reasonably be understood in the context of that idea and its condemnation.²

Calvin rejected the necessity of infant Baptism.³ His view is summarized by Professor H. G. Wood, in Hasting's *Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics*, where the reference to the traditional interpretation of John 3, 5, should be noted:

"Calvin's standpoint is well illustrated (1) by his rejection of the baptism of children *in extremis* as superstitious, and (2) by his abandonment of the traditional interpretation of John 3, 5. Under the first head he regarded lay baptism as unnecessary, and baptism by women as a presumptuous sin. Their only justification was the absolute necessity of baptism; but this he denied. 'Unbaptized children are not therefore excluded from the kingdom of heaven.' The elect child will be saved, baptized or unbaptized. Under the second head, he claimed that the phrase 'born of water' does not refer to baptism, but 'water and spirit' in this passage are one and the same thing—the action of the Spirit is cleansing, like that of water."⁴

St Robert Bellarmine declares that Calvin's opinion about the salvation of unbaptized infants is nothing less than heresy, and accumulates a mass of witnesses among the Fathers which it would be wearisome to repeat.⁵ In this, Bellarmine is representative of all theologians who write upon the subject.

In the Eastern Church the same interpretation is likewise traditional. Origen, *d.* 255, argues, like St Augustine and St

¹ Denz. 791.

² Cf. Denz. 102, the Council of Carthage of 418 against the Pelagians; Trent adopted almost all its words, but added "*ad vitam aeternam consequendam*", probably because the Fathers at Trent did not wish to renew the 3rd Canon of Carthage, but wished to make clear that unbaptized infants are excluded both from the kingdom of heaven and from eternal life.

³ *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, bk. 4, ch. 15, n. 20; ch. 16, n. 25, 26.

⁴ Vol. 2, p. 401.

⁵ *Controversiae*, 3, *De Sac. Bapt.*, 1, 4; and *De Amiss. Gratiae et Statu Pec.*, 6, 2.

Thomas, from the necessity of Baptism to the existence of original sin,¹ though he carefully connects the interpretation of the famous text with the tradition "received from the Apostles".² St. Basil,³ St John Chrysostom⁴ and St Gregory of Nyssa are very fierce against those who defer Baptism. St Gregory of Nyssa says: "When I hear that voice which cannot be false declaring 'Amen, amen, I say to you unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot see the kingdom of God,' I can anticipate nothing good for those who are not baptized. . . . How can the soul unsealed, unmarked, be recognized by angels and received into paradise?"⁵ The reference, indeed, is to culpable omission of the sacrament; but among the Greeks the opinion of The Theologian, St Gregory of Nazianzus, appears to have been very generally accepted, namely, that infants dying unbaptized are neither rewarded nor punished,⁶ and infants were baptized at once in danger of death.⁷ In the *Questions to the Orthodox*, probably composed about the fifth century,⁸ and in the *Questions to Antiochus*, a work probably of the sixth or seventh century, falsely attributed to St Athanasius,⁹ this opinion of St Gregory of Nazianzus is given, though without mentioning the authority. The same is true of Cosmas Indicopleustes, writing about the year 547; but he adds that some think that God takes infants from life before they have an opportunity of being baptized because He foresees that they would be exceedingly wicked if they lived. He himself withholds judgement about this.¹⁰ Euthymius, writing in the twelfth century, also repeats the view of St Gregory that unbaptized infants are neither rewarded nor punished.¹¹

The later Greek tradition is the same. Jugie cites several

¹ In *Levit.* 3, 3, MPG 12, 496.

² In *Rom.* 5, 9, MPG 14, 1047.

³ *Hom. in Bapt.* 2, MPG 31, 427.

⁴ In *Phil.* 3, 4, MPG 62, 203 ff., where he repeats John 3, 5, with impressive force.

⁵ *De Bapt.*, MPG 46, 424 B.

⁶ *Or. 40 in Bapt.*, MPG 36, 390.

⁷ *Ibid.*, col. 400. St Gregory of Nyssa, in his work *Infants Who Die Prematurely*, is most obscure; Palmieri judges that he is thinking of baptized infants, not without good reason, cf. *De Deo Creante*, pp. 547-8.

⁸ MPG 6, 12, 96.

⁹ MPG 28, 672.

¹⁰ MPG 88, 378.

¹¹ MPG 130, 1282.

theologians representative of the Russo-Greek Church, notably Demetrios Chomatenus who dealt with the question at some length, and their view, with one or two exceptions, accords with that of The Theologian, St Gregory of Nazianzus.¹ The Catechism of Constantine Economos, approved by the Patriarch Cyril V in 1815, reads as follows:

"Infants dying unbaptized, although they suffer no punishment, having committed no sin, nevertheless are not accounted worthy of the kingdom of heaven, since they have not been cleansed of the original stain by the divine washing and have not obtained the spiritual rebirth."²

To conclude, then, about evidence arising from the interpretation of John 3, 5: Christians generally understood the text as excluding unbaptized infants from heaven. To justify this traditional interpretation from a strictly exegetical point of view is beyond the present purpose.³ The traditional interpretation admitted exceptions in the case of martyrdom and the desire of Baptism; but the second of these exceptions was clearly inapplicable to infants.

3. Further evidence in connexion with awareness of the difficulty of reconciling God's goodness with His exclusion of these children from heaven.

From the time of St Augustine it was always admitted that the penalty of original sin was different from the penalty attaching to personal mortal sin. The former was *mitissima*, as St Augustine said; but up to the eleventh century it was not distinguished in kind from the punishment of personal mortal sin. The work entitled *De Fide ad Petrum*, although in fact written by Fulgentius of Ruspe, d. 533, was commonly attributed to St Augustine, and its assertion that unbaptized infants are in eternal fire was often quoted, as, for instance, in Gratian's *Decretum*.⁴ St Gregory the Great thought that these infants were

¹ *Theologia Dogmatica Christianorum ab Ecclesia Catholica Dissidentium*, vol. 3, Paris, 1930, pp. 101-103.

² Jugie, *op. cit.*, p. 101.

³ Cf. *in loc.* Toletus, Maldonatus, Knabenbauer, Corluy, Lagrange, d'Alès in *Dict. de la Bible*, Suppl., art. *Baptême*, Paris, 1928, cols. 856-8, Vosté, *Studia Joannea*, Romae, 1930, excursus on the dogmatic meaning of the text, pp. 128-139. In doctrinal import and frequency of citation the text may be compared with John 1, 14, on the Incarnation, Matt. 16, 18-20, on the Primacy, Matt. 26, 26-28, on the Eucharist, and John 20, 22-25, on Penance.

⁴ Pars 3, *de consecratione*, d. 4, c. 3, Friedburgh, 1, 1362.

in "torments".¹ But towards the end of the eleventh century St Anselm, in his *De Conceptu Virginali*, laid stress upon the difference between a personal sin and the sin of nature, which involves no personal voluntariness, but consists in the privation of the rightness—*justitia*—which ought to be present. There is, says Anselm, a great difference between the two; and consequently the penalty attaching to these different sins must be entirely different: "no one doubts that the same penalty must not be inflicted for sins different in quality".² Nevertheless, Anselm goes on to say that there are some "whose heart cannot accept the fact that unbaptized infants are damned, since no man would blame them for a sin which some one else committed, and God surely does not judge more harshly than man".³ Anselm answers that God's judgement must be conditioned by the fact that He had given original justice to the whole of human nature, which involves a knowledge of the whole history of mankind such as no man can have. But then he adds that even human judgement would not be much different, and to show this gives a comparison which is still used in Catholic Truth Society's pamphlets. If a king, out of sheer liberality, bestowed upon a man and his wife gifts of nobility and of riches quite beyond their deserts, and if then they committed without excuse or extenuation a great crime against the king, he would be justified in depriving them of the estate which they had not originally earned, and that privation would affect their children who personally may commit no crime.⁴ Unbaptized infants are deprived only of superadded gifts to which they have no claim, and thus there is no injustice. Anselm appears to be the first who stressed the fact that original sin is essentially a pure privation.

Abelard, *d.* 1142, likewise struggles to meet the difficulty against God's goodness; but his reasoning is far less kindly than Anselm's. He begins by remarking that since God's will is the norm of moral rightness, whatever God does is necessarily right, and hence however God chooses to treat His creatures, it will

¹ Mor. 9, 21, MPL 75, 877; and 4, 3, MPL col. 635 B.

² "Nemo dubitat quia par poena non sequatur inaequalia peccata." *De Con. Virg.*, 23, ed. F. S. Schmitt, O.S.B., Edinburgi, 1946, p. 165.

³ *Ibid.*, c. 28, p. 170.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 171.

be right and good.¹ This view is based upon the idea that the origin of possibilities lies in God's will and not, as St Thomas afterwards held, in His essence.² Abelard, however, then attempts a more positive justification, and points out, although without quoting St Anselm, that the sole penalty for original sin is to "suffer the exterior darkness, which is a lack of the vision of the divine majesty". Moreover, he conjectures that St Augustine, when speaking of infants being in "eternal fire" may only have meant the mental suffering involved in the privation of the beatific vision.³ He goes on to the consideration, very common in the twelfth century,⁴ that God permits only those infants to die before Baptism who He foresees would be most wicked if they lived and would suffer worse punishment. He then argues that all of us are made more earnest in seeking salvation "seeing the fate of these infants, who are deprived of the burial and the prayers of the faithful; and we are made more grateful to God, since we have deserved worse, from which God's grace has saved us beyond our merits".⁵ The parents of infants dying unbaptized have greater compunction of heart and greater fervour in serving God.⁶ These reasons of Abelard do not, it must be confessed, carry conviction, and it is significant that the theologians of the thirteenth century abandoned them. Nevertheless Abelard's repetition of Anselm's definition of original sin as a mere privation of superadded gifts was pregnant and fruitful.

Cardinal Pullen, *d.* 1147, likewise was fully aware of the difficulty. He says that God could save these infants without the need of any human remedy; but Pullen conjectures that there are three reasons why He does not do so: (1) lest men should think less of original sin; (2) lest people should grow careless in baptizing infants, on the ground that they would all be saved whether baptized or not; and (3) to show that no one has a right to God's grace, and thus we are made more humble and grateful.⁷ St Bernard, *d.* 1153, says that the "penalties to

¹ *Ex. in Rom.* 2, MPL 178, 870.

² *Summa*, 1, Q. 25, a. 3, *et alibi*.

³ *Col.* 870.

⁴ Cf. the MSS. of St Florian cited by Landgraf, *art. cit.*, p. 531.

⁵ *Col.* 873.

⁶ *Col.* 873.

⁷ *Sent.*, 3, 2 and 3, MPL 186, 766, 767.

which they are liable are entirely due to sins for which they are not responsible and are therefore mild in the extreme; at any rate that is what our feelings prompt us to believe, that is what our hearts urge us to hope".¹ Master Gandulph of Bologna, writing about 1150, had a codex in which Augustine is made to say that the penalty of original sin in the case of unbaptized infants is *durissima*, instead of the correct *mitissima*. He explains this as meaning only that the penalty is worse than any we experience in this life, because it is unending, whereas suffering in this life is not.²

Peter Lombard, writing likewise about 1150, insists upon Augustine's *mitissima omnium poena*, and asserts without any qualification that infants dying unbaptized "will suffer no pain of fire nor worm of conscience, except that they will forever lack the vision of God".³ This view made rapid headway in the second half of the twelfth century, partly due to the enthusiastic support given to Peter Lombard's work by Peter of Poitiers, chancellor of the University of Paris, *d.* 1205; he follows the Lombard almost verbatim about the penalty suffered by unbaptized babies.⁴ Pope Innocent III, in his letter *Maiores* to the Archbishop of Arles in 1201, asserts that "the penalty of original sin is the lack of the vision of God, of actual sin, the torment of eternal hell".⁵ Innocent appears to accept this as certain doctrine.

In the thirteenth century Peter Lombard's expression was universally accepted. St Albert the Great in his *Commentary*, written probably between 1245 and 1252, adds that Augustine in consigning infants to fire "speaks loosely, calling the penalty

¹ *Sermones in Cantica*, 69, 3, MPL 183, 1114.

² *Sententiarum libri quattuor*, ed. Ioannes de Walter, Vindobonae, 1924, n. 220, p. 270; de Ghellinck in his *Mouvement Théologique du xii Siècle*, p. 222, regards the dependence of Gandulph upon Peter Lombard as established, and cf. de Walter, intro. lii. Yet it is very strange that Gandulph, if he had read the Lombard's clear citation of a *mitissima poena* in bk. 2, 33, should have understood Augustine as having written *durissima poena*.

³ *Sent.*, 2, d. 33.

⁴ *Sent.*, 2, n. 38, MPL 211, 1021.

⁵ Friedberg, vol. 2, 646, where the whole letter is cited. Innocent introduces the doctrine only incidentally; he is arguing that Baptism could not remit original sin in a sleeping adult unless there was the intention to receive Baptism, and says that if original sin were remitted, the man would have the right to the beatific vision, and yet at the same time be condemned to hell because of unremitted mortal sin. Denz. gives only part of the letter, n. 410.

of loss a positive suffering".¹ St Albert is one of the first to use the expression "the children's limbo".² Alexander of Hales, *d.* 1245, also repeats the Lombard's assertion about infants suffering only the pain of loss, and explains Augustine's—really Fulgentius'—consignment of them to eternal fire by saying that they are not in fire as regards burning, but only as regards darkness, which darkness is the lack of the vision of God.³ St Bonaventure, writing his *Commentary* between 1248 and 1255, depends greatly upon Alexander of Hales, and says the same.⁴ St Thomas in the *Commentary*, 1245–1256, in the *De Malo*, 1263–1268, and in the *Summa* follows the Lombard's doctrine that the penalty is merely the loss of the beatific vision, but supports it by reasons far more convincing. He uses the expression "children's limbo",⁵ and in the *De Malo* thinks that words such as torment, pain, hell and suffering, which occur about unbaptized babies in the writings of the Fathers, must be understood in a wide sense as only meaning some penalty in the generic sense.⁶ He likewise gives what seems an unanswerable case for excluding any mental suffering, though he says that other theologians think that such infants experience some mental affliction because of their exclusion from heaven.⁷ Richard Middleton, *d.* 1307, a follower of St Bonaventure, judged that these infants have more joy in created things than many have in this life, which they are so loath to leave.⁸ Scotus in the *Opus Oxoniense*, written probably about 1303, approves both St Thomas' opinion on the matter and Middleton's.⁹

It is against this background that the Decree of the second Council of Lyons, in 1274, the letter of Pope John XXII to the Armenians in 1321, and the Definition of the Council of Florence in the Bull *Laetentur Coeli* of 6 July 1439 must be understood and interpreted. The profession of faith prescribed in 1267 by Pope Clement IV for the Greek Emperor, Michael Paleologus, and

¹ In 4, d. 4, a. 8 sol. et ad 1.

² In 4, d. 44, Paris ed. 30, p. 603. But Stephen Langton used it even earlier, cf. Landgraf, *art. cit.*, p. 541.

³ *Summa* 2–2, Inq. 2, tract. 3, q. 3, n. 253. Quaracchi ed., vol. 3, pp. 266–7.

⁴ In 2, d. 33, a. 3, q. 1.

⁵ *Summa*, 1–2, Q. 89, a. 6.

⁶ Q. 5, a. 2, ad 1.

⁷ *Com. in Sent.*, 2, d. 33, q. 2, a. 2.

⁸ *Sent.*, 2, d. 33, a. 3, q. 2, ed. Brixiae, 1591, vol. 2, p. 415.

⁹ 2 D 33, q. unica.

signed by him for Pope Gregory X,¹ contains the following words:

"The souls of those who die in mortal sin, or only in original sin, go down at once into hell, to be punished, however, with different penalties—*illorum autem animas qui in mortali peccato vel cum solo originali decedunt, mox in infernum descendere, poenis tamen disparibus puniendas.*"²

John XXII used the same words, except that he added "and in different places" to the "with different penalties"—"*poenis tamen ac locis disparibus puniendas.*"³ In Raynald's *Annal. eccl. ad an. 1321*, at the end of the text given above, is added: "*nimirum puerorum animas poena damni non sensus in limbo afficiendas.*" This addition, however, does not appear in the text in the Vatican Archives; but when it was added, or by whom, remains a mystery.⁴ The Council of Florence repeated the words of Lyons, practically without change.⁵

The reason for these declarations of faith about the fate of men after death may have been that a variety of odd opinions had been reported in the West as being held in the East. A suggestion of this is given by Benedict XII in 1341 who wrote to the Armenians giving a list of errors which some said were current among the Armenians. The sixth of these is that the souls of unbaptized infants of Christian parents go after death to a kind of terrestrial paradise, but if the parents are not Christian, the souls of their unbaptized infants join the parents in the other world, wherever the parents may be.⁶ The Armenians the year following, 1342, assembled to the number of twenty-five Archbishops and Bishops, with nineteen Abbots and other prelates, and declared that although some few might hold strange opinions, nevertheless the errors mentioned did not represent the faith of the Armenian Church. As regards the fate of unbaptized infants, they declared that the faith of the Armenians drew no distinction between the children of Christian

¹ Mansi, 24, 79 ff.

² Denz. 464, and cf. note 2 on p. 214.

³ Denz. 439 a.

⁴ Cf. A. Straub, *Unbeachtete Kundgebungen ex Cathedra*, *Zeitschrift für Katholische Theologie*, 1928, pp. 79-80. It was Fr Segarra who verified the document in the Papal Archives.

⁵ Denz. 693.

⁶ Denz. 534.

and of non-Christian parents, "but according to the word of the Lord,¹ held that they are all deprived of the heavenly paradise, and although they do not go to glory, still they are not made to suffer any positive pain". Exactly where they go, the Armenians continue, is not defined in the Armenian faith; but that faith can readily accept the teaching of the Roman Church about Limbo.²

At the Council of Florence there was no difference of view between the Latins and the Greeks about the fact that unbaptized infants are excluded from the happiness enjoyed by the blessed. There was, however, divergence of view about the particular judgement.³ The formula used: "the souls of those who die in actual mortal sin, or only in original sin, go down at once into hell, to be punished, however, with different penalties", was the same as that used at Lyons, and the emphatic word is *mox*, meaning *immediately, at once*, since it meant that the punishment is not delayed until the resurrection of the body. But the *poenae disparet*, as Fr E. Candal has recently shown, unquestionably refer "to the different kinds of pains which in Catholic doctrine [*sic*] constitute hell, the pain of loss, or the privation of the beatific vision, and the positive pain inflicted by fire". In confirmation he quotes John de Torquemada, O.P., who had so large a part in the preliminary discussions, explaining the *poenae disparet* to the Greeks: "pro disparitate, scilicet et diversitate poenarum: Qui enim in peccato mortali actuali discedunt, cum poena damni affliguntur etiam poenis sensibilibus ignis et aliorum suppliciorum. Qui in solo originali peccato discedunt, non patientur poenam aliquam sensibilem, sed solum poenam damni".⁴ The Council, of course, did not define that there are souls who die either in original sin or in mortal sin; but the definition certainly takes for granted the possibility of there being such souls, and if there is a possibility of one soul dying in original sin, it is not easy to see why there should not

¹ John 3, 5.

² Mansi 25, 1194.

³ Cf. G. Hofmann, *Formulae Praeviae ad Definitionem Concilii Florentini de Novissimis*. Gregorianum, 1937, p. 354, n. 29.

⁴ *Processus Discussionis de Novissimis in Concilio Florentino*, in *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, vol. xix, 3-4, 1953, p. 339; he refers to his *Apparatus Ioannis de Torquemada super Decretum Unionis Graecorum Concilii Florentini Documenta et Scriptioes*, 2, 1, Romae, 1940, p. 94.

be many. To interpret the Council of Florence as meaning merely "if any die in original sin, and we do not know if there are any such", certainly appears somewhat arbitrary; for Councils and Popes speak in the name of the Church, express her mind, and must be interpreted in view of the meaning commonly attached in the Church to the terms and language used. The *poenae dispare*s of Lyons and of Florence originated in the words of St Anselm, "par poena non sequitur inaequalia peccata", and reflects the universal teaching of Fathers and Doctors of the Church since the second century.

Before ending, mention must be made of two suggested exceptions to the ordinary course of events which places unbaptized babies in Limbo. In the twelfth century, the case was given of a baby dying while it was being carried to be baptized, and the suggestion was made that in such a case God might save the infant. Landgraf¹ cites three or four theologians of the twelfth century who thought that in such a case God might make an exception and save the infant; but the vast majority, including Master Roland, afterwards Pope Alexander III, thought that even such an infant would be lost. The other case touched the question of intention in the minister of Baptism; several theologians of the thirteenth century thought that if the minister withheld his intention, and the sacrament was thereby invalid, it might be piously believed that Christ would supply the intention. So judged Alexander of Hales, *d.* 1245, St. Bonaventure, *d.* 1274, who adds "si tamen non facit, iuste facit", Hervé of Nedellec, *d.* 1323, Durandus of St Pourçain, *d.* 1334.² St Thomas does not condemn this opinion, but observes that such infants, even if saved, would not receive the baptismal character, and prefers to think that a "mental intention" is not required in the minister. By this he appears to mean that no other intention is required than is expressed in the form of the sacrament,³ and thus he avoids the difficulty.

These two exceptions, however, far from weakening the

¹ *Art. cit.*, pp. 529-542.

² References in Lennerz, *De Sacramento Baptismi*, ed altera, Romae, 1948, p. 104.

³ *Summa*, 3, Q. 64, a. 8. To enter into the question of the meaning of a "mental intention" is beside our present point; some appear to have thought that the minister must elicit a special intention over and above seriously meaning what he says in the form. St Thomas rejects this view and thinks it is enough for the minister to mean what he says in the form.

general agreement that unbaptized infants do not go to heaven, on the contrary strengthen it; for it is only in these unusual circumstances that an exception was admitted by anyone. The general sense of the Church may be gathered from the condemnation of Ricci's objection to Limbo by Pius VI, in the Bull *Auctorem Fidei* of 28 August 1794:

"The teaching which repudiates as a Pelagian fable the existence of a place [which the faithful everywhere—*passim*—call the children's limbo], in which the souls of those dying in original sin alone are punished by the pain of loss without any pain of fire; as if by denying the pain of fire one thereby necessarily postulated a middle place or state such as the Pelagians imagined, involving neither guilt nor penalty, between the kingdom of God and eternal damnation: this teaching is false, rash and slanderous to Catholic schools of theology."¹

Now, the immediate import of this condemnation is to deny that the children's limbo was identical with the "eternal life" imagined by the Pelagians; and the force of Pius VI's words falls upon the charge of heresy made against a teaching very common among Catholics. The strict letter would not touch anyone who said that Limbo was a permissible opinion, but that he himself did not hold it. This, however, is of relatively small importance; what is of the greatest consequence is the assertion that "the faithful *passim* speak of the children's limbo". This is undeniable evidence that the teaching of theologians was not a bookish matter or confined to lecture rooms, but was widely spread among the faithful at large and was accepted by them. That acceptance involved an acceptance likewise of the teaching that infants "are punished by the pain of loss", the loss, that is, of the beatific vision or the kingdom of heaven. It would, indeed, have been strange if the faithful had not universally accepted that teaching, consecrated as it is by the Fathers, Councils, and Supreme Pontiffs.

There have, of course, been some who doubted; in past times Durandus, *d.* 1332, Cardinal Cajetan, *d.* 1534, Eusebius Amort, *d.* 1775, Bianchi, *d.* 1768, Louis de la Marne, in 1817, Klee, in 1835, Caron, in 1855,² Herman Schell, in 1893.³ In recent times, there have been some writers who have expressed

¹ Denz. 1526.

² On the Index.

³ On the Index.

doubts, or who have proposed some means by which infants unbaptized in the normal manner by water and the invocation of the Trinity, may find an entrance into heaven. They have written in a thoroughly Catholic spirit, courteously and learnedly, and have called attention to difficulties which are not easy to answer. In spite of this, they have not appreciably weakened the evidence of the universal teaching of Fathers, Doctors, Councils, Popes and theologians of the Church; and they disagree among themselves about the nature of the means by which these infants may enter heaven; what one asserts, another denies, and thus their witness is not concordant. It is hoped to discuss some of their views in a subsequent article.

They have, of course, been opposed by other theologians: by J. Lelièvre, in *La Pensée Catholique*, 1947; by J. Leblanc, in *The American Ecclesiastical Review*, September 1947; by J. McCarthy, in *The Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, 1950; by H. Diepen, O.S.B., in *Studia Catholica*,¹ 1948; and notably by A. Michel, in several issues of *L'Ami du Clergé*. All these writers express their scruples about the soundness of the opinion they attack, and the following is the considered judgement of Mgr Michel:

"Il est indubitable que la doctrine catholique impliquée dans le dogme de la nécessité du baptême pour la rémission du péché originel, est que les enfants morts sans baptême ne peuvent jouir de la vision béatifique. Si cette doctrine n'est peut-être pas encore un dogme de foi, parce qu'elle n'a pas été proposée directement comme un dogme par le magistère de l'Église, elle est tout au moins une vérité proche de la foi, susceptible d'une définition dogmatique."²

Those who know the writings of Mgr Michel in the *Dictionnaire de Théologie Catholique* will appreciate the weight of his judgement upon such a question, a judgement he supports by citations from other theologians, some of whom assign the qualification *de fide definita*, and not merely *definibilis*.

BERNARD LEEMING, S.J.

¹ Holland.

² *L'Ami du Clergé*, 15 Jan. 1948, p. 33, repeated from the same review of 1931. This judgement of Mgr Michel, like the *Allocutio* of Pius XII, was first called to my attention by my friend Fr Peter Gumpel, S.J., who also very kindly sent me a full bibliography of recent writings on the subject, copies of some articles and summaries of others, together with several most pertinent suggestions. He is, of course, in no wise committed to anything I say.

LATIN AS A LIVING LANGUAGE

MOST priests have learned Latin in one of two ways. Either they have learned young in the old-fashioned way, swotting declensions and conjugations and proceeding from sentences about Labienus to the Gallic War and so to Cicero and Virgil; or else they have learned at a later age and in a less meticulous way. The latter probably have a sneaking feeling that their Latin is not as good as that of their confreres who acquired it in their tender years, but in reality they are not so unfortunate. The student by the old-fashioned method has learned a rigid system of what he calls Classical Latin and he tends to regard Church Latin as an inferior form of the language.

What we call Latin is a dead language and it is natural enough to take its best literary productions as the criterion of what it was. The Fathers of the Church are accordingly weighed in the balance with Cicero and found wanting. But this simple comparison ignores two important factors. Firstly, Cicero was endeavouring, like a skilled craftsman-artist, to produce the greatest aesthetic effect that Latin was capable of; the Fathers were using Latin to teach all men the truth of God. Secondly, between Cicero and the Fathers lie several centuries in which the language was slowly but inevitably changing.

Classical Latin may be defined as the language used by the elevated writers of the first century B.C. Cicero is taken as representing the highest achievement in prose and Virgil in poetry; the language of other writers is discussed in terms of the purity of their Classical idiom. It must not be assumed, however, that departure from this norm implies inferiority; the history of the Classical language must be examined before judgement is passed.

The rigidity of the framework of Latin grammar as learned at school obscures the fact that the Latin language was a pliant and living thing. Like all living languages it was in a constant state of evolution. Latin cannot be understood from inside the framework of Classical Latin; one must look at it from outside and see its position in history and in relation to other languages.

Now, the position of Latin in the history of human language can be determined with some accuracy. It is an elementary fact that languages are never static. The English of today is not that of St Thomas More, neither as regards pronunciation nor idiom. If two regions speaking the same language are cut off from each other, the development in each is not identical. The longer they remain separate, the more they diverge. Thus it is that Latin in Northern Gaul and Spain evolved into French and Spanish.

Latin and the closely allied Oscan and Umbrian have evolved in this way from a common language, usually called Italic. They have so much in common with the Celtic languages that it can be argued plausibly that both groups descend from a common Italo-Celtic language. The languages most closely related to those of the Italic and Celtic groups are the Germanic ones. All these groups and many others descend from Indo-European. Further back than that, in the present state of our knowledge, we cannot go. Latin is a middle term, a stage of the development from Indo-European to modern French and Italian. Just as French and Italian cannot be understood without reference to Latin, so neither can Latin be understood without reference to what preceded it.

When a system of spelling is agreed upon and accepted, it holds good long after the inevitable evolution of pronunciation has made it obsolete. English spelling has hardly varied over the last few centuries, whereas the pronunciation has varied considerably. The result is that spoken and written English today correspond to each other only approximately. To take a single example, *gh* represents the sound of *ch* in Scottish *loch*. English has lost that sound; hence the chaotic state of the words ending in *ough* and the pronunciation of words like *night* (still pronounced *nicht* in Scotland). To the observer from afar, who looks at the written word only, no such change is visible, for the spelling has remained the same. Fixation of spelling disguises the evolution of pronunciation and preserves on paper the state of a language as it was at a previous stage of its development. It is rather like a photograph which fixes a player in one moment of his action. This has happened with Latin: first the spelling, and later the grammarians, have caught Latin in its admittedly most graceful position, and Classical scholars, in admiring

the grace, do not always see its position in relation to the movement of which it is part.

The historian of the Latin language has to establish the particular stage of evolution at which this fixation took place and try to discover how the evolution continued beneath the disguise of this fixation. Now, in a highly inflected language (i.e. in which verbs, nouns, etc., have many different endings) word order does not matter much. It is obvious from the ending whether each noun is subject or object or the rest, what is the person and tense of the verb, which adjectives describe which noun, and so on. Indo-European was like this. Each word made sense of itself and its function in the sentence was clear without reference to other words. On the other hand, modern French has no case endings but needs the addition of prepositions instead; verbs have pronoun subjects and the auxiliary verbs *to have* and *to be* are needed to form perfect and passive tenses. The subject must precede the verb and the object follow it, except in certain well-defined cases. It is important to realize that French is the present-day state of what was once Indo-European: Indo-European has evolved imperceptibly, with no jumps and no break in continuity, from being a highly inflected language into the very opposite. Latin is that language at a stage between the two, just as the young man is the baby at a stage of his development into an old man.

It therefore goes without saying that Latin presents characteristics in between those of Indo-European and French. It is less highly inflected than Indo-European and more highly inflected than French. There are still sufficient inflections for word order to be comparatively unimportant. Virgil can write: *cum prima novi ducent examina reges*, and it is clear which adjectives describe which nouns. Latin has the three Indo-European genders while French has only two; it has preserved only two of the three Indo-European numbers, but the unusual endings of *ambo*, *duo*, *duobus*, etc., are a relic of the dual and a proof of its existence. As regards cases Latin is in an anomalous, not to say chaotic, state. The photograph has caught it, in this respect, at an awkward moment. Indo-European has eight cases, Latin six, Old French two, modern French none. But let us examine Latin's six cases. In reality there are seven, for the locative still

survives in a fragmentary state. One of the six, the vocative, exists for certain masculines only. Nouns like *mensa* have genitive and dative singular the same; nouns like *annus* have dative and ablative singular the same; all nouns have the same form for dative and ablative plural. One could make a long list of such anomalies.

When case endings disappear, prepositions take their place. In Latin simple ablative is used for the instrument (the old instrumental case) but *a* must be added if it be a personal agent; *cum* must be used to express accompaniment; a preposition like *a* must be added for the real ablative (i.e. motion from), *in* must be added to indicate rest in a place. *Ad*, etc., must be used with the accusative for motion towards. But, the school textbooks say, for towns, small islands, *domus* and *rus*, simple ablative, locative and accusative respectively are to be used. This is a most obvious transitional state, the makeshift of a language in process of change.

The verb is more orderly. It is still highly inflected and verbal endings indicate person, tense and voice. There is, however, one important exception: the perfect tenses of the passive are compounded of the verb *to be* and the adjective in *-tus*. This destroyed the symmetry of the verb and was bound to lead to great changes.

The second task of the historian of Latin is to trace the continuous evolution beneath the unchanging surface of fixed spelling. It is easy to verify that Latin was in evolution in the period before the spelling was fixed. Latin literature began in the latter half of the third century B.C. A few inscriptions are prior to this, but the first of certain date are the decree of Paulus Emilius (189 B.C.) and the "Senatus consultum de Bacchanalibus" (186 B.C.). The spelling of the first is more modern than the second, which followed the ancient models, and a comparison between them and the Classical spelling is instructive. A few examples must suffice here. The "Bacchanalia" inscription gives *foideratei* for *foederati*, *deicerent* for *dicerent*; there are no double consonants, e.g. *ese* for *esse*; there is a final *d* after long vowels, e.g. *suprad* for *supra*; the *k* sound is represented by *qu*, e.g. *quom* for *cum*, *oquolto* for *occulto*. The decree of Paulus Emilius writes these in more phonetic spelling, thereby testifying that in 189 B.C. final *d* had ceased to be pronounced, and so on.

We have another source of information about early Latin: comparison with the sister languages Umbrian and Oscan (found written on the ruins of Pompeii) and with other Latin dialects, for instance that of Preneste, where a brooch with an inscription ascribed to the sixth century B.C. was found. The immediate antecedents of Latin as we know it can be worked out, and the phonetic laws which governed its development established with some accuracy. Perhaps the most interesting of these was the change of *s* between vowels to *r*, a characteristic of Umbrian also. It was not very old, for the grammarian Varro knew of ancient spellings like *meliose* for *melio*rem, *foedesum* for *foederum* (which explains why neuter nouns ending in *-us* have a stem with *r* in it). Cicero knew that the gens *Papiria* used to be called *Papisia* and that L. Papirius Crassus, dictator in 339 B.C., was the first to spell his name with an *r*. The consonants *l* and *d* were sometimes interchanged; hence *odor* but *olere*, *sedere* but *solium*, old Latin *dacruma* (cf. Greek *dakry*) but later *lacrima*. The greatest changes were in the vowels. Vowels in the initial syllable of a word remained unchanged, but short vowels not in the initial syllable were weakened. This accounts for *capio* but *accipio*, *egeo* but *indigeo*, *salto* but *insulto*, and so on. Sometimes the vowel was so weakened that it disappeared altogether and gave syncopated forms like *pergo*, *surgo* (*surrigo* exists too) with perfect *perrexi*, *surrexi*, but this is not as common in Latin as in Osco-Umbrian. Much in Latin, as in any other language, can only be explained by accepting the fact that it is the outcome of evolution and tracing that evolution back. This holds good of etymologies also: *tormentum* comes from *torc-mentum* (which shows the connexion with *torquere*), *iumentum* from *iouxmentum* (cf. *iugum*), *meridies* from *medi-dies* (cf. *medius*). Some words, such as *sifilare*, *casa*, *asinus*, *rufus*, run counter to Latin phonetics in which there was no *f* or *s* between vowels. They are not exceptions to the rule but borrowings from neighbouring dialects.

Latin orthography was fixed once and for ever in the second century B.C. and it is clear that the Latin represented by this spelling was the outcome of linguistic evolution. The Classical grammatical system which one learns at school is not a dateless, unchanging standard of Latin at its best, but merely the mechanism of a changing language at a certain point of time. It will not

serve as a yardstick for measuring the Latin of the Fathers who wrote at a considerably later point of time.

It remains now to examine the growth of the great literature. The Latin of the third century B.C. was that of men of affairs. It was unified and not a hotch-potch of different dialect forms; it was exact and sufficiently elaborated to meet the needs of administration and law; but it was not plastic and delicate enough to express philosophical ideas or to be a suitable medium for the nuances of elevated literature. The only culture in the Mediterranean at the time was that of Greece. When the Romans became the dominant power they realized their cultural inferiority and set out to remedy the defect. Their masters in this were of necessity Greeks and the Romans began to learn from them, cautiously at first, then openly. The history of written Latin in the two centuries before Christ is the acquisition of what Greek rhetoric had to teach as to style, and the growing power to express the fullness of Greek thought. Roman prestige, however, would not permit them to Hellenize themselves too blatantly and the language retained its native vocabulary and idiom.

It is no accident that the first poet of whom we have certain knowledge, Livius Andronicus, was a Greek. Through him Greek made its first impact on Latin literature. His contemporary, the Roman Naevius, wrote comedies based on Greek models and using Greek metres. Next came Ennius, who was known as the father of Latin literature but whose native languages were Greek and Oscan. He invoked the Greek Muses of Mount Olympus in his poems and introduced the Greek quantitative hexameter into Latin poetry. Quantitative metre was not native to Latin and the hexameter was not suited to Latin, but because it was Greek it was accepted and Virgil used it for the *Aeneid*. The feet in this metre had to consist either of two long syllables or of a long syllable followed by two short ones. Many Latin words contained a short syllable between two long ones and therefore would not fit the metre. Such words as *ingredi*, *intuetur*, *imperator*, could not be used, so the poets invented *indogredi*, *indotuetur*, *induperator*. Ennius imitated Greek constructions and introduced tmesis, or the splitting up of words. One ludicrous example is well known: *saxo cere comminuit brum* for

comminuit cerebrum. Participles had to a large extent disappeared from Latin but under the influence of Greek usage their use was increased and extended. The Homeric simile and epithet were imitated and new compound adjectives coined. Some, like *sapientipotentes*, were not happy creations. Greek words were borrowed, sometimes with their original ending (e.g. accusative *aera*), sometimes latinized (e.g. *draco*, *draconis* from *drakon*). The serious poets, however, would not employ a Greek word if a native one would do, and when they did use one they usually added some formula like *ut aiunt Graeci*. Sometimes they used a Latin word, added the Greek word as an alternative, and so procured for the native term the fuller meaning of the Greek. In this way *sapientia* gained the richer meaning of *sophia*. The poets were trying to make Latin express all Greek culture and their readers read them in the same spirit.

These procedures were continued and intensified in the Golden Age. Virgil did not consent to such forms as *induperator* but even he was hard pressed by the exigencies of the hexameter metre. He used Greek endings like accusative *-a* and Greek forms like *Scipiadas* since *Scipionem*, etc., would not fit; he adopted the licences found in Homer, resorted to archaisms and even invented some of his own. The man with the greatest authority in matters of language was the prose writer, Cicero. Quite apart from his philosophy, his influence on literary style, both for his own and succeeding ages, has been unrivalled. Under his leadership literary Latin became an instrument of precision. Where alternative forms had existed side by side only one was now allowed: the passive infinitive in *-ier* and the third person plural perfect ending in *-ere* were condemned. Tendencies which ran counter to spelling and etymology were resisted; thus initial *h*, which was being (or had been) lost, was restored. As in modern England, the uneducated dropped their aitches and the would-be educated added them out of place. Final *s* after a short vowel was disappearing and poets used to treat final *us* as ending in a vowel, e.g. the hexameter ending *doctus fidelis*. It was now restored and the new poets counted such a foot as long.

Cicero was practically bilingual, steeped as he was in Greek literature and thought, but his aim was to make Latin convey his cultural message. He avoided Greek words, therefore. Some

he could not avoid, and he usually accompanied these with a saving expression: *ii qui mathematici vocantur*. He continued the expedient of transferring the richness of the Greek to a similar Latin word; *ars* and *ratio* came to express the connotations of *tekhne* and *logos*. He occasionally coined a new word on the analogy of Greek; *qualis* and *poios* were adjectives but *poios* had a noun derived from it whereas *qualis* had not. Cicero made a like one for Latin, *qualitas*. In the same way he coined *medietas* from *mesotes*.

The Latin of the Golden Age served to express Hellenic culture in a naturalized form. It was designed to this end and received its peculiar character from it. Is it, then, legitimate to compare the Latin of the Golden Age with that of the Fathers? Style and vocabulary vary according to the purpose they are used for; the requirements of sermons and theological articles differ very much from those of debating speeches and literary efforts. Nobody dreams of comparing the English of the new Scripture commentary with that of *The Path to Rome*. The Fathers had a message to convey and used the language best suited to it; when we read them it is not in the hope of having our literary palate tickled. Comparison with Cicero is a red herring. Direct comparison like this may not be very common but unfortunately the same cannot be said of the assumption that the Fathers wrote Latin inferior to Cicero's.

From what has been said of the development of literary Latin up to the time of Cicero, it is clear that there was a great deal of artificiality about it.¹ Hellenization and the cultivation of literary language must have affected a very limited circle. Ciceronian Latin was not so much a point in the evolution of the living language on its way to being the Latin of the Fathers several centuries later as a deviation from that way. It was not in the middle of the stream which flows from early Latin to the spoken Latin of the Christian era and so to the Romance languages of today. Rather it was a quiet pool to the side. Many popular tendencies visible before the Classical period were condemned by the men of letters and found no place in their writings, but re-emerged later and had a marked influence on the formation of the Romance languages. They had never ceased to

¹ This must not be taken as a condemnation.

affect common speech, and it is from the common Latin speech, not from Classical Latin, that the Romance languages descend.

The pronunciation of *h* is a case in point. It had for a long time been almost, if not totally, silent; *aenus* had been spelt *ahenus* to show that the two vowels were in separate syllables. In scansion *h* did not count as a consonant and *ab*, *ex* were used before initial *h* as before vowels. This disregard of *h* continued in common speech and there is no sign of it in any Romance language¹. Final *s* after a short vowel likewise disappeared in Romance.² Latin had two forms for third person plural perfect, those like *dixere* and those like *dixerunt*, with a short *e*. The grammarians made a tertium quid out of these, *dixerunt*, with a long *e*, and imposed it. But the forms in the Romance languages derive from the form with the short *e* and have the accent on the stem.

The older Latin speech was full of Greek words, not cultural ones but terms of commerce, medicine and everyday things. The first Greek borrowings (e.g. *oleum*, *gubernare*) were through the uneducated speech of the plebeians, for Greek was the lingua franca of the Mediterranean. The comedies of Plautus (late third century B.C.) are full of Greek words and it is the low characters who use them. There was a word *pergraecari* meaning to go on the spree, and *congraecari* meant to go to the dogs completely. In the speech of better-class characters such words are rare. The more elevated poets, as we have seen, avoided Greek words if they could, and those they did use were cultured ones, yet in the Christian era colloquial Greek words were common. One of the most striking characteristics of the Romance languages is that many words derive from frequentative verbs and diminutive nouns and not from the ordinary forms. Frequentatives and diminutives were common before the Classical era but are rarely to be found in serious writers since they were rather slangy. Cicero avoided them in his literary compositions but used them freely, along with Greek words, in his familiar letters. They never ceased to be used in ordinary speech.

St Augustine wrote: "Melius est reprehendant nos grammatici quam non intelligant populi." Can we legitimately com-

¹ The French "aspirate" *h* does not derive from Latin.

² Except, curiously enough, in France, where the influence of the schools preserved it.

pare the Latin of those who were teaching all men with the Latin of those who were deliberately not addressing themselves to the common herd? It is, nevertheless, instructive to follow the evolution of spoken Latin after the fixation of the spelling and then see how much alike the Latin of Cicero and the Fathers is.

Spoken Latin continued to change during the Classical epoch and even at the time of Cicero spelling and pronunciation did not agree entirely. We have mentioned *h* and final *s*. Final *m* was not pronounced either; this is the reason for *m* being elided before a vowel in poetry. It was sometimes written sideways to show that it was silent and one of the Fathers (Terullian, I think) says that the uneducated took it for a Greek sigma and pronounced it *s*. In the inscription "de Bacchanalibus" *consuleretur* is written *cosoleretur*; this was the pronunciation and remained so: *n* was not pronounced before *s* and so we have *spouse* from *sponsa*, *measure* from *mensura*. At a rather later date *b* between vowels became *v*.

These few examples must suffice. The last change mentioned had important consequences, for it meant that *amabit* and *amavit* were pronounced the same. This made Latin evolve a new future tense and was an important contributory cause to the break-up of the Classical tense system. The loss of final *m* and of final *s* after a short vowel played havoc with the case system, as one can easily see. It was already in a rather disorganized state and this wrecked it completely. Prepositions and word order had to take over the function of case endings and the grammatical character of the language changed. At the same time a radical change came over the rhythm of the language. The accent had hitherto been a purely musical one (i.e. the pitch of the voice) but now it became a stress, or accent as we know it.¹ As a concomitant of this, the vowel system changed from five vowels, each both long and short, to seven vowels of the same length.

It must be admitted that the grammar in the works of the Fathers differs little from that of Cicero. One finds *dixit ad me* for *dixit mihi*, *misit illos* for *misit eos*, *natus fuisset* for *natus esset*, and

¹ If we hold with some philologists that the original Latin accent was one of stress, it follows that Classical Latin, which certainly had no such thing, was artificial in this matter also. The difference between accentuation in Cicero and the Fathers will still be the same.

so on. But these are the sort of thing one would expect to find after the passage of a few centuries and are in the direct line of evolution from Latin to French and Spanish. They correspond to such differences as those between *you are* and *thou art*, *three times* and *thrice*, in English. The style of the Classical authors and that of the Fathers differs greatly, but the different purposes they had in view invalidate any comparison on that score, particularly when it is realized that Classical Latin was a deliberate departure from the language spoken by the people. On the other hand, the differences in grammar are negligible and give little indication of the sweeping changes wrought by the hand of time in the rhythm and grammatical structure of Latin. Our gaze should not stop short at these slight departures from Classical usage; rather ought the correctness of the Fathers' grammar to compel our admiration.

MARK DILWORTH, O.S.B.

"SUFFERED UNDER PONTIUS PILATE"

OUR familiarity with the Creed may have deadened our sensitiveness to the discordant note struck by the mention of Pontius Pilate. But surely it is strange that this person, who is, after all, rather a minor character in himself, should be the one "profane" character to be mentioned in the same breath as the Father Almighty, the Son born of the Virgin Mary, and the Holy Ghost. At first sight it seems to be explainable as a determination of the time at which the crucifixion, the most important event in the world's history, took place. But that is not the sort of thing one expects in a bare formulary of beliefs: we do not find it for any other incident—we do not say, for example, "born in the reign of Augustus". And in any case, within a short time of the event, certainly by the time the creeds were formulated, most people would neither know nor care when Pilate was governor of Judaea; on the contrary, Pilate would be remembered and would be dated by the death of our Lord, not vice versa. This phrase, then, calls for further explanation, if one can be given.

"It is not lawful for us to put anyone to death" (John xviii, 31). The usual interpretation of this phrase is that the Jews had lost the right to pass the death sentence, so that if they wanted anyone put to death, the Romans had to do it for them. But this is by no means as certain as is sometimes thought. After all, in view of what we know of the Roman way of dealing with their provinces and with Judaea in particular, it seems probable that they would interfere with established customs of the Jews as little as possible. It is more likely that they would retain a power of veto on death-sentences passed by the national courts, than that they would remove altogether the right of capital punishment. The only references given on the subject, to Josephus (see commentaries of Lagrange and Westcott, *ad loc.*), need actually prove no more than this. Moreover, in the New Testament itself we know of two cases, that of the adulterous woman in John viii and that of St Stephen, where the traditional death penalty by stoning was imposed. It seems at least possible, then, that what the Jews wanted at our Lord's trial was not merely Rome's permission, but for Rome to take the responsibility.

In any case, it will be agreed that the Jews showed a curious insistence that our Lord should be put to death according to the Roman forms of law. When they first call on Pilate to intervene they try to force his hand by blustering; when he suspects that this is a purely Jewish affair, in which the Roman authority should not intervene, they skilfully alter the appearance of the charge to one of high treason. (One may note in passing that commentators have always found it difficult to reconcile Pilate's advice on this occasion, "Put him to death yourselves", with the supposed meaning of their reply, "It is not lawful".) And John takes the opportunity to point out that in no other way could our Lord's prophecy, "If I be lifted up . . ." have been fulfilled: God's plan, in which the Jews were unconsciously collaborating, demanded that the death should be crucifixion. Moreover, this seems to be a new step in the proceedings. After our Lord had been condemned by the Jews, one would expect them to rush straight off to Pilate to have the warrant signed, and proceed to execution by stoning. But there is a significant pause, then: "They handed him up to Pilate." It is also sig-

nificant that it is just at this point that Matthew tells us of the remorse of Judas—as if up to now he had been conscious of treachery, no doubt, but of a treachery that he could reconcile with his duty as a Jew; but this last step is one which he had not bargained for and which strikes him as the climax of disgrace. The same point is suggested by a comparison between the various prophecies of the passion in Matthew. One would expect our Lord to prepare His disciples for the scandal of the cross by leading them up to it gradually. Now in the first prophecy (Matt. xvi, 21) He tells them that He would have to suffer much from the Jewish authorities and be killed. In the second (xvii, 21), that the Son of Man would be betrayed into the hands of men and killed. In the third we read (xx, 17): "The Son of Man will be betrayed into the hands of the high priests and the scribes and they will condemn him to death, and they will betray him to the gentiles . . . to be crucified." We have the impression that the betrayal to the Gentiles is the last and final disgrace, which could only be told as a climax to the prophecies, on the eve of its happening.

All things considered, it seems that the part played by Rome in the death of our Lord is more important than we usually think. Why was this so? Why were the Jews so anxious to drag Rome into the affair? "It is not lawful for us . . ." Even admitting the usual interpretation of this, surely it would have been easy for them to stage a scene of mob-violence: there could have been the usual diplomatic apologies afterwards, but the affair would have been safely settled; and that, too, without the humiliation of recourse to Rome. The most natural explanation of their reluctance to do this is no doubt to be found in the gospel account itself: "They feared the people." If our Lord had sufficient influence to make them chary of how they captured Him, it would be even more hazardous to proceed to execution on their own initiative: far better risk the humiliation and even, as it turned out, the uncertainty involved in laying the responsibility on the Roman authorities. That is undoubtedly the main motive behind their actions. May one suggest another, more subtle? The people were ready to accept our Lord as the Messiah. Now the Messiah of popular expectation was to be a liberator, a champion, one who would restore the

kingdom to Israel by freeing them from the yoke of subjection. That claim was either true or false. By handing Him over to Pilate, the Jewish authorities were providing a test case. If it were true, this king of the Jews must take this opportunity to show that it was true, precisely by liberating Himself. They would force Him to show His hand, to raise the standard of revolt, to free at once Himself and the people: in which case, so much the better—after the revolt was over and the victory won they could easily explain their actions. If, on the other hand, His claim was false, then His failure to free himself would be decisive proof of it, and the people would swing round and join their rulers in condemning Him: "His blood be upon us." Perhaps one can hear an echo of this conflicting attitude of mind in their jeers at the foot of the Cross: "If thou be the Son of God come down from the cross. . . . He saved others, himself he cannot save." Perhaps until that moment, even at that moment, they half-feared, half-hoped, that He was the Messiah, come to free Israel.

Perhaps not all the arguments given so far have the same force. Perhaps we are attributing too much subtlety to the Jews. But one thing does remain certain. The deliverance of our Lord to Pontius Pilate was, in the term used regularly in all references to the Passion, "betrayal". We must remember the notoriously fanatical hatred of the Jews for any infringement of their independence: it must have been galling for them to have to ask any favour of the authorities, to admit any right of theirs to judge Jewish affairs. Moreover, this was not merely a question of a pride that could not brook subjection: it was essentially bound up with their religious beliefs, with religious beliefs, in fact, which made them a nation. They were God's people: their subjection was an insult to God. With this is linked their idea of a political Messiah who would restore their supremacy by political victory. Now, not merely to suffer Rome's interference but actually to invite it: to invite Gentiles to judge a fellow Jew and actually force them to do so: to invite them to judge on a question of religion: and that precisely on an article of faith which involved their very relations to Rome: all this was a climax of treachery. They collaborated with the occupying power. They admitted the rights of Rome, and so denied

their own. In betraying our Lord, they betrayed themselves. We, today, can hardly imagine the horror that would be caused by the cry: "We have no king but Caesar." It was the denial of their whole history, the reversal of that loyalty which made them a nation: "The Lord is our king, ye his people, sheep of his flock." Israel, the chosen people, no longer exists. They have abdicated their rights.

And it is at this point that the theology of the early Church concerning the position of the Gentiles begins. "You betrayed and denied Jesus before Pilate who wanted to release him" (Acts iii, 13). Therefore there is no longer a chosen people with exclusive rights before God. Therefore the Gentiles can take their place—instead of the original stock, the wild olive is grafted in. "Their fall is the salvation of the Gentiles" (Rom. xi, 11).

And here we can see the reason of the insertion of Pilate into the Creed. It is a perpetual reminder of the ultimate treachery of the Jews: their betrayal, which involved the abdication of their own position, and thus opened the way for the Gentile church to inherit it. "He suffered under Pontius Pilate": the crucifixion marks the turning point in history, the end of one age and the beginning of another; His own have refused Him, He goes to those who will receive Him; to the betrayal of the Jews: "We have no king but Caesar," it opposes the Church's reply: "Regnavit a ligno Deus—super gentes."

L. JOHNSTON

THE CHALICE OF BENEDICTION

THERE is only one reason why the Jews were blameworthy in turning away from our Lord when He said "Unless you eat the Flesh of the Son of Man and drink His Blood . . ." There is only one reason, but it is a profound and all-sufficing reason. Our Lord, the sound of whose voice fell on their outward ears, was working on their inward dispositions by the merits of His Precious Blood, and they resisted. The sentence as it stood,

and as it still stands, is shocking. If possible it is more shocking to talk of drinking blood than to talk of eating flesh, and if our Lord had not been working inwardly on the Jews' souls they would have been doing the right and natural thing in walking away.

One way of appreciating devotion to the Precious Blood and increasing one's love of the Blessed Sacrament is to dwell upon the fact that our Lord *was* talking in a shocking way. One no longer feels the shock, except perhaps when one hears school-children reciting, as most certainly they should recite, "I believe that I shall receive Thy Sacred Body to eat and Thy Precious Blood to drink." Incidentally, of course, our Lord is also the authority for the specifically personal description of the Holy Eucharist: "He that eateth ME, the same also shall live by ME," and possibly both forms of approach should be taught to children, and then they might not give such incomplete and somewhat disconcerting answers as "God's Body" to the question "What do you receive?" It is surely important that they should show they are aware that they are not receiving, say, our Lord's Body as It lay in the tomb, but the Living and Glorified and Personal Jesus. But, to resume, it is by His Precious Blood, offered to God in the Mass, received in Holy Communion, that souls are saved, vocations to the priesthood and the religious life obtained, the conversion of England and the world achieved.

In 1897 Cardinal Vaughan issued a pastoral on the Precious Blood and this pastoral, fortified with quotations from holy writings, became No. 20 of Religious Booklets for the people. Pity it is, and a thousand pities, that such pastorals, like so many good books, get cluttered over with stuff new and untried.

Blood, when seen in any quantity, disturbs and alarms us all. St Paul, referring to the Old Testament, and comparing it with the New, tells us that almost all things are *cleansed* by blood, while the Apocalypse speaks of those who have *washed* their robes in the Blood of the Lamb. Presumably the old Jews were used to it, but how should we like to see the missal sprinkled with blood, or the altar, or the vestments? How should we like our clothes to be sprinkled at the asperges with blood instead of holy water? Yet altar, book, priests' vestments,

people's clothes, were sprinkled with blood in the Old Testament. We do not look upon blood as a cleansing or washing agent. Indeed, how long would missal or vestment last under such treatment? But for God working through the blood of oxen and heifers, with the Precious Blood of Jesus in view, the whole thing would be grotesque and horrible like an orgy. And yet there is reason for it, even in nature, for "The life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it to you, that you may make atonement with it upon the altar of your souls, and the blood may be an expiation of the soul."

The blood of heifers and oxen in the Old Testament had its power by virtue of the Precious Blood, for the Blood of Jesus is the Blood of God and therefore acted backwards and forwards over the whole of human history. The reason why we speak of the Precious Blood as if it literally washed us, and as if we were literally plunged in it, is stated by Cornelius a Lapide: "St Thomas," he says, "states that there is in the Body and Blood of our Lord a physical power of sanctifying us, as they were physical instruments used by God for this purpose. But when St Paul says 'You are come to Jesus by the sprinkling of blood' we are not to understand that we are washed by a physical and material pouring of the Blood on us, but by the outpouring and application to us of the merits and satisfactions which flow from the Blood, shed with so much love for our redemption, for our cleansing and sanctification."

Yet the shock which the Jews felt we also feel when we isolate such a sentence as the following from the life of St Teresa of Avila: "The Blood of Jesus seemed to fill her mouth." Once we get over such a shock, the realism of the experiences of the saints must necessarily help our own "drinking of the Blood of the Son of Man". On the occasion in question after Holy Communion, St Teresa's whole person seemed to be covered with the Precious Blood which maintained the warmth it had when shed on the Cross, and our Saviour said to her: "I wish your soul to experience the wonderful effects of My Blood; fear not that My Mercy will fail you. I shed this Blood in torments that you might enjoy it in the midst of delights."

Now it is true that the Church's liturgy places the emphasis on *Corpus Christi*, the *Body* of Christ, even though we know

that His Blood can never more be separated from His Body. This is not strange, and yet it is worth remark, for, as Cardinal Vaughan said: "It is to be borne in mind that we are *redeemed* by the Precious Blood, not by the Sacred Body of Christ, not by His tears, His sighs, His sufferings. Is then the Blood in itself better, more availing, more precious than any other part or attribute of the Incarnate Word? Assuredly not. Then why 'by the Blood'? . . . because such was the decree of Eternal Wisdom." The emphasis, then, in the Liturgy, is on the Body of Christ, and yet when Pius XI celebrated the nineteenth centenary of our redemption in 1933 he raised the feast of the Precious Blood to greater liturgical dignity than it had hitherto enjoyed. He did so "that greater fruits of the Precious Blood of Christ the Immaculate Lamb might flow into our souls, and the memory of the Precious Blood might be more clear and vivid to our recollection". One way, undoubtedly, in which greater fruits and more vivid memory may be realized is that one should try to reflect as much upon the words of St Paul, "The Chalice of Benediction which we bless is it not the Communion of the Blood of Christ", as upon his other words, "The bread which we break is it not the partaking of the Body of the Lord."

We do in fact drink this Blood, in real physical truth, though not in a gross or cannibalistic manner. And therein precisely the Jews failed and St Peter stood true. The Jews should have believed what He said, and trusted to His love and wisdom for the manner of its fulfilment. St Peter did not know how our Lord would get over the cannibalistic difficulty, but he said "Lord, to whom shall we go . . .?" Now, St Teresa's experience was wonderful, but it was wonderful only in so far as it brought home to her, and brings home to us, the much more wonderful fact of her and our Holy Communion Itself. We do actually drink this Blood, whereas Teresa's mouth only seemed to be filled with it, and her figure only seemed to be covered with it. We actually drink the Life-giving Blood of Him who is humility, generosity, chastity, meekness, temperance, brotherly love, diligence. By it we are built up in Him, who is the embodiment of all these virtues, for what is the good thing of Him, and what is His beautiful thing? It is the corn of the elect and wine engendering virgins, martyrs, and all the elect. There is no

direct contact with the Precious Blood like the contact of Holy Communion, and as Cardinal Vaughan again says, in a passage reminiscent of Bishop Hedley:¹ "We shall do more in one day towards the destruction of the monster of Self-love by direct contact with the Blood of Jesus Christ, than by years of mortification without such devout recourse to the Precious Blood."

What sounds² shocking to the carnal ear is so much spirit and life to the heavenly ear that it is the theme of glory. The Jesus who is received is the glorified Jesus who liveth now to die no more; His Blood shall no more be shed. How we know not, but this we know, that the Sacred Wounds are recognizable in His glorified Body, and so far from disfiguring it are like so many gems sparkling red with the Precious Blood. The lips of a man's mouth are red. The Wounds of Christ are red, and the lips of the Wounds are ever speaking intercession for us. If the blood of a martyred Father Walpole being sprinkled on a Campion obtained for him the grace of conversion, priesthood, martyrdom; if the blood of St Stephen gave St Paul to the Church, what are we to say of the Blood of Jesus that engenders martyrs, virgins and all the elect? A battlefield is horrible with blood, yet blood shed in a good cause is glorious; the uniform dyed with it is not stained, but is an instrument of cleansing.

The triumphant vision of the Precious Blood was already seen by Isaias: "Who is this that cometh forth from Edom, with dyed garments from Bosra, this beautiful one in His robe, walking in the greatness of His strength?" while the Apocalypse is the apotheosis of the Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world, and redeemed in His Blood out of every tribe and tongue and people. The Apocalypse describes the eternity when the Precious Blood no longer needs to make intercession for men, but receives power and divinity and wisdom and strength and honour and glory and benediction from those for whom It has interceded. If this is the Blood we drink, assuredly by It "a pledge of future glory is given to us".

STEPHEN RIGBY

¹ *Retreat*, in the chapter "Looking on Jesus".

² "Doth this scandalize you?" (John vi, 62).

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

COMPETENT PRIEST IN MIXED MARRIAGES

Who is the competent priest lawfully to assist at mixed marriages? Are the rights and obligations of the parish priest of the baptized non-Catholic to be respected exactly as they would be in the case of his Catholic parishioners? Or is it more correct to hold that, in such cases, he has no rights with respect to the marriage of a baptized non-Catholic parishioner? (D.)

REPLY

Canon 1097, §1. Parochus autem vel loci Ordinarius matrimonio licite assistunt:

1. Constito sibi legitime de libero statu contrahentium ad normam iuris;

2. Constito insuper de domicilio vel quasi-domicilio vel menstrua commoratione aut, si de vago agatur, actuali commoratione alterutrius contrahentis in loco matrimonii;

3. Habita, si conditiones deficiant de quibus n. 2, licentia parochi vel Ordinarii domicilii vel quasi-domicilii aut menstruae commorationis alterutrius contrahentis, nisi de vagis actu itinerantibus res sit, qui nullibi commorationis sedem habent, vel gravis necessitas intercedat quae a licentia petenda excuset.

The common law of the Code makes no express provision for these cases. Accordingly, unless local law intervenes, two views are possible.

i. The law makes no distinction and no special rules for the marriages of baptized non-Catholics who, therefore, come within the common law of canon 1097. This view is held by Cappello,¹ Woywod,² Sabetti-Barrett,³ and by Kelly in a doctorate dissertation on parochial rights.⁴

ii. Others, more correctly we think, hold that the parish

¹ *De Matrimonio*, §683.6.

² *Practical Commentary*, I, §1118.

³ *Compendium*, p. 918.

⁴ *The Functions Reserved to Pastors*, p. 84, quoted in *Ecclesiastical Review*, 1951, p. 388.

priest of the non-Catholic is not competent, his interest in non-Catholic parishioners being of the very general character expressed in canon 1350, §1, "commendatos in Domino habeant". This view was defended when dealing with the more limited question of the rights of the bride's parish priest,¹ and the same conclusion must follow in deciding who is competent for all marriage purposes: the competent priest for mixed marriages is the parish priest of the Catholic party. This view is supported by analogy with canon 1964 which decides who is the competent judge in marriage causes: "... iudex competens est iudex loci in quo matrimonium celebratum est aut in quo pars conventa vel, si una sit acatholica, pars catholica domicilium vel quasi-domicilium habet". It is the solution favoured by Fanfani, a canonist on whom we all chiefly rely in defining parochial rights: "... si agatur de matrimoniis mixtae religionis ... tunc semper coram paroco sponsi catholici matrimonium est celebrandum".² He quotes canon 1097, §2, perhaps because of a certain analogy with the rule which, apart from local law to the contrary, favours the rite of the man in marriages of mixed rite. One is on surer ground in justifying this opinion from the exception "gravis necessitas" in §1,3 of the canon.³ Mulder, a Dutch canonist who has specialized in the subject of parochial rights, states unhesitatingly "Mixed marriages are always contracted before the pastor of the Catholic party".⁴ Martin in a practical treatise on marriage widely used in France, and Feuntun in explaining the instruction *Sacrosanctum* give the same solution.⁵

iii. The rather curious thing is that the Code makes no reference to this point, and consequently the majority of commentators do not advert to it, whilst going very fully into the law about diverse rite. It is a question which could be very suitably settled by local legislation and we should be glad to hear of any diocesan regulations on the subject: we have failed so far to trace it in any of the collections at our disposal.

¹ THE CLERGY REVIEW, 1951, XXXVI, p. 304.

² *De Iure Parochorum*, §325 B.

³ Ayrinhac, *Marriage Legislation*, p. 242; Aertyns-Damen, *Theol. Morlais*, II, §841.

⁴ *The Parish and its Clergy*, Eng. tr. by Van Vliet, p. 140.

⁵ *Le Mariage*, §253; *L'Instruction Sacrosanctum*, p. 14.

Perhaps one should add a note for the unwary. The question is not whether the parish priest of the non-Catholic can validly assist at marriages of non-Catholics within his parish, about which there can be no dispute whatever: his assistance is valid for all comers in his territory. It is solely a question of deciding which of the parish priests who can validly assist is entitled to do so lawfully: we think it is the parish priest of the Catholic party, who can of course give permission for the marriage in the non-Catholic's parish, and even (if he is lucky) get the parish priest to act as his delegate in the marriage preliminaries required by the instruction *Sacrosanctum*.

CREDENCE TABLE

Why is it called "credence"? And is a small table more correct than a niche in the wall, or vice versa? (F.)

REPLY

Rubricae Generales, XX. In cornu Epistolae . . . ampullae vitreae vini et aquae cum pellicula et manutergio mundo, in fenestella seu in parva mensa ad haec praeparata.

i. It is called "credence" from the Latin "credere" which, in addition to the meaning to which we are accustomed, can denote entrusting, loaning or depositing something—hence the business word "credit". The table or niche is a credence because the articles mentioned in the General Rubrics are deposited there.

ii. Some, with little justification, understand "fenestella" to mean the small wicker basket in which the cruets and accessories are carried, as is the custom in Rome and elsewhere.¹ Its actual meaning is a small window or opening in a wall, and "niche" seems about the best word for it in current use. It has the advantage of being unobtrusive, and of not disturbing the lines of the sanctuary; and since the rubric gives it precedence it is, in our view, preferable to a small table.

iii. If a small table is preferred *Caeremoniale Episcoporum* gives

¹ Sadlowski, *Sacred Furnishings of Churches*, p. 116.

the following description: "Restat, ut de mensa, seu abaco, quam credentiam vocant pauca subiiciamus. Ea vero in Missis tantum solemnibus praeparari solet a latere Epistolae in plano Prebyterii, si loci dispositio patiatur, atque a pariete parumper disiuncta; ita ut inter illam et parietem stare possint familiares Episcopi . . . Eius mensura regulariter erit palmorum octo in longitudine, in latitudine quatuor vel circa, in altitudine quinque, vel modicum ultra; lineoque mantili mundo super strato, usque ad terram circumcirca pendenti, contegetur".¹ For pontifical and other solemn functions the table is a necessity, and it should be in position only for the functions. It is not correct to leave the small table permanently on the sanctuary, and still less correct to place another one on the gospel side solely for the sake of appearances. Some commentators, however, think that custom justifies leaving a credence table permanently on the sanctuary, even when only Low Mass is there celebrated.²

EVENING NUPTIAL MASS

Could one properly seek the Ordinary's permission for a nuptial Mass, which normally is part of the rite of marriage, to take place in the afternoon? (T.)

REPLY

Christus Dominus in Norm VI, and the instruction in n. 12,³ mentions the Ordinary's permission for evening Mass on one day of each week, in addition to other occasions, but the documents very clearly limit the concession by supposing that there is some necessity of a public nature: "Si rerum adiuncta id necessario postulant", "Bonum commune aliquando sacrorum mysteriorum celebrationem post meridiem expostulat", "die uno in hebdomada, praeter dies supra memoratos, si bonum peculiarum personarum classium id postulat".

The nuptial Mass is obviously for the private benefit of the

¹ I, xii, 19. *Ephemerides Liturgicae* (Ius et Praxis) 1940, p. 110, has a good commentary on this text.

² THE CLERGY REVIEW, 1937, XIII, p. 147.

³ THE CLERGY REVIEW, 1953, XXXVIII, pp. 175, 179.

parties contracting marriage, and could not normally come within the above rule. One can imagine, nevertheless, a very exceptional nuptial Mass which might in the Ordinary's judgement qualify for his permission: the marriage of a prominent parishioner or of a man in public life who has deserved well of the Church, and at whose marriage a great concourse of people is to be expected if it could take place in the afternoon.¹

The same consideration applies to the Requiem Mass which normally accompanies the rite of burial. In fact the conditions laid down by the documents could more easily be verified on this occasion than at marriages.

E. J. M.

EUCCHARISTIC FAST BEFORE EVENING MASS

There still appears to be some doubt persisting as to when, and in what form, alcoholic drink may be taken by those who intend to communicate at, or celebrate, evening Mass. Is there any ground for such doubt? (H.)

REPLY

Constitution *Christus Dominus*, 6 January 1953, Norm VI: "... servato a sacerdote ieiunio trium horarum quoad cibum solidum et potus alcoholicos, unius autem horae quoad ceteros potus non alcoholicos. In his autem Missis christifideles ad Sacram Synaxim accedere poterunt, hac eadem servata norma ad ieiunium Eucharisticum quod attinet. . . ."

Instructio S. Officii, 6 January 1953, n. 13 (as amended in the authentic text, *A.A.S.*, 1953, XLV, p. 50): "Sacerdotes, qui pomeridianis horis Missam celebrant, itemque fideles qui in eadem communionem recipiunt, possunt *inter refectionem*, permissam usque ad tres horas ante Missae vel communionis initium, sumere *congrua moderatione* alcoholicas quoque potiones inter mensam suetas (v.g. vinum, cerevisiam, etc.), exclusis quidem liquoribus. Quoad potus autem, quos sumere possunt ante vel post dictam refectionem, usque ad unam horam ante

¹ Thus *l'Ami du Clergé*, 1953, p. 348.

Missam vel communionem, excluditur omne alcoholicorum genus."

i. In our opinion, there is no ground for reasonable doubt as to when, or in what form, alcoholic drink may be taken in the above circumstances: the only point which is not yet clear is how often. The Holy Office Instruction states categorically that no alcoholic drink *of any kind* (hence not even wine or beer) is allowed outside of the permitted meal, that customary table drinks such as wine, beer, etc., may be taken in moderation with the meal, but that no spirits (*liquores*) are allowed even with the meal. The inescapable conclusion, drawn by the late Canon Mahoney¹ and by all other authors whose commentaries we have read, is that spirituous drinks are completely forbidden from midnight until after the evening Mass. We have not heard of any published opinion to the contrary, and cannot see how any such opinion could be probable.

ii. It is true that Norm VI of the Constitution makes no restrictions as to the time or kind of alcoholic drinks, apart from requiring a three-hour abstinence from all such drinks. If, therefore, Norm VI were the only legally binding text on the point, it would be difficult to reconcile the restrictions made by the Holy Office with a proper interpretation of the law. But, as it happens, this particular Instruction of the Holy Office was confirmed, with statutory force, by the Holy Father himself. It was issued "iussu mandatoque Summi ipsius Pontificis", the word "statuit" was set at the head of its rulings, and it was ordered by the Pope to be promulgated along with the Constitution. It is, therefore, part and parcel of the new law, with a binding force equal to that of the papal Constitution.

iii. The only part of the question, therefore, on which there is ground for reasonable doubt is whether non-spirituous alcoholic drinks, such as wine, beer, etc., may be taken at more than one meal, up to three hours before the Communion or celebration. The literal sense of the Instruction would certainly seem to imply that they may be taken at one meal only, because, in both references to the *refectio*, the singular is used; and this is the conclusion drawn by some writers of great authority.² But

¹ THE CLERGY REVIEW, March 1953, p. 162; April 1953, p. 230.

² E.g. Hürth, *Periodica*, 1953, p. 78; Castellano, *Monitor Ecclesiasticus*, 1953, p. 404.

the literal sense would equally imply that only one meal of solid food may be taken during the day. Since this implication is too hard on transalpine stomachs to be really probable, we consider it reasonable to interpret *refectio* in the broad sense, as meaning *a* meal, rather than *the* meal. Until the point is officially settled, therefore, it is safe to follow the view of the many authors¹ who hold that non-spirituous alcoholic drinks may be taken, in moderation, at any meal up to three hours before Communion or celebration of Mass. This view is certainly extrinsically probable. According to Oren W. Key, S.J., who has tabulated the opinions of twenty-seven commentators on this question, thirteen replied in the affirmative, fourteen in the negative.²

EVENING COMMUNION—CRITERION OF *LIQUORES*

The Instruction on the fast to be observed by those who communicate at an evening Mass excludes *liquores* from the range of drinks permissible at meal-time. What is the precise meaning of this term? (M.)

REPLY

It is generally agreed that the reference is to spirituous liquors, but there is not, as yet, any authentic definition of what constitutes a liquor within the meaning of the law, or any generally accepted criterion by which such a liquor may be clearly differentiated from every other form of alcoholic drink. Some commentators hold that the criterion of distinction between a liquor and a wine is to be found, not in the percentage of alcohol, or the addition of a flavouring, but simply in the process of production. A wine is the result of fermentation, whereas a spirituous liquor is produced by distillation. Hence, says Bride, a distilled drink is a liquor, even though the alcoholic content may be as little as 18 degrees, whereas a fermented

¹ E.g. Mahoney, loc. cit.; Bride, *L'Ami du Clergé*, March 1953, p. 208, note 9.

² *Theology Digest*, Vol. II, no. 1, Winter, 1954, p. 57.

drink remains a wine, even though its alcoholic content has been fortified to a similar level; and consequently "apéritifs à base du vin" are not liquors in the sense of the law.¹ This interpretation would seem to tally with the generally accepted notion of spirituous liquor in this country.

On the other hand, Fr Castellano, O.P., a member of the Holy Office, rejects this criterion as being, for some reason which he does not specify, hardly practical. Nor is he prepared to accept the criterion used in Italian civil law, whereby liquors are drinks containing more than 21 degrees of alcohol, because the alcoholic content of some drinks, generally recognized as liquors, has been deliberately modified to evade the duty on spirits. He prefers, therefore, to rely on the criterion of common estimation, as being more in line with the mind of the Holy Office, which uses this criterion in determining the permitted drinks: "alcoholicas potiones *inter mensam suetas* . . . *exclusis quidem liquoribus*". Hence, he agrees with Mancini that Vermouth and commercial Marsala (as distinct from that which is drunk in and around Marsala) are excluded, because, although "both are presented as wines, it is certain that they are not customary at meals, and are therefore really liquors".²

In our view, this criterion of common estimation is much less practical than that based on the process of production, because it is too elastic to decide borderline cases, and it is only for them that a criterion is needed (no one doubts the exclusion of whisky, brandy, gin, etc.). In countries like Italy, where wine is plentiful, there may be general agreement as to what drinks are customary at table, but in countries such as ours, where any alcoholic beverage other than beer is a luxury, the propriety of any particular drink at table is more a matter of individual taste and opportunity. We prefer, therefore, the simple rule: if it is a distilled drink, it is forbidden on days of evening Communion, in or out of meals; if it is not, it can be taken at meal-time, though, of course, only at meal-time.

L. L. McR.

¹ *L'Ami du Clergé*, April 1953, p. 252. Similarly Hürth, S.J., *Periodica*, March 1953, p. 78.

² *Monitor Ecclesiasticus*, 1953, p. 404. His opinion has, of course, only private authority.

ROMAN DOCUMENTS

SATURDAY VOTIVE MASS DURING MARIAN
YEAR

SACRA CONGREGATIO RITUUM

DECRETUM

URBIS ET ORBIS (*A.A.S.*, XLV, 1953, p. 819)

Mariano Anno a Summo Pontifice Pio Papa XII, per Encyclicas Litteras "Fulgens corona" diei 8 Septembris vertentis anni, indicto; ut erga Deiparam Virginem Mariam pietas populi christiani exardescat cotidie magis, et non tantum privatae sed publicae etiam supplicationes ad suavissimam Matrem admoveantur, Sacra Rituum Congregatio, de mandato Sanctissimi Domini, benigne indulget ut, durante hoc Mariano Anno, a die videlicet octava Decembris mensis ad eundem adventuri anni diem, in omnibus ecclesiis et oratoriis, singulis per annum Sabbatis, legi possit unica Missa votivo-privata, cantata vel lecta, de Immaculata Conceptione Beatae Mariae Virginis, dummodo non occurrat festum duplex I vel II classis, feria, vigilia, aut octava privilegiata primi et secundi ordinis, festum, vigilia aut octava ipsius Deiparae; et insuper aliquod pium exercitium peragatur in honorem Beatae Mariae Virginis. Servatis de cetero rubricis.

Contrariis quibuslibet non obstantibus. Die 29 Novembris 1953.

✠ C. Card. MICARA, Ep. Velitern., *Pro-Praefectus*

† A. Carinci, Archiep. Seleuc., *Secretarius*

PAPAL ADDRESS ON TOLERATION OF EVIL

ALLOCUTIO

IIIS QUI INTERFUERUNT CONVENTUI QUINTO NATIONALI ITALICO UNIONIS IURECONSULTORUM CATHOLICORUM.¹ (*A.A.S.*, 1953, XLV, p. 797. Excerpt.)

... We want now to discuss with you, who are Catholic jurists, a question that arises in a community of peoples, namely, the practical co-existence of Catholic with non-Catholic States.

Peoples and member-States of such an international community

¹ Habita die 6 Decembris mensis a. 1953. Tr.: the Rev. Hugh Lavery.

will divide on the question of religion. Some will be Christian, some non-Christian, some indifferent, some positively secular or even avowedly atheist. The belief of the majority or a positive ruling by the State will determine its religious character. Now in the international community religion and morality will require a clear ruling valid for the whole of each sovereign member-State. This ruling of positive law will presumably run something like this: each State will regulate its own religious and moral affairs in its own territory, but over the whole extent of the international community of States the citizens of each member-State will be free to live according to their own religion or ethics, as long as these do not conflict with the penal laws of the State in which they are residing.

This raises a question for the jurist, the statesman and the Catholic State: can they consent to such a ruling in order to become a permanent member of an international community? And two further questions, of religion and morality, stem from this. One is a question of objective truth and the duty of conscience towards what is objectively true and good. The second question turns on the conduct of the community towards the sovereign State, and vice versa, in a question of religion or morality. Clearly the first question does not lend itself to discussion; it cannot be settled by a ruling between States and the community, especially when there may be many different religious beliefs in the same community. The second question, however, is of pressing importance.

We must now deal with the right way to answer this second question. One thing must be made clear straight away—that no human authority, no State, no community of States, no matter what their religious character, can give a positive command or authorization to teach or to do anything contrary to religious truth or moral good. Any such command or authorization would not bind and would be without effect. No authority could give such commands, because it is contrary to nature to compel man's spirit and will to evil or to error, or to consider either of them as morally indifferent. God Himself could not give a positive command or authorization of that sort; it would contradict His absolute truth and holiness.

Another question, essentially different, is this. Could this rule be established, at least in certain circumstances, in a community of States, namely, that the free exercise of a belief, or religious or moral practice, valid in one of the member-States, should not be hindered in any part of the community's territory by coercive laws or measures of the State? In other words, the question is whether "non impedire" or toleration is allowable in certain circumstances, and positive repression not always a duty.

We have just invoked the authority of God. Although God could easily repress error and moral deviation, could He in certain circumstances choose the "non impedire" without contradicting His infinite perfection? Could He in *certain circumstances* refrain from giving men a mandate, from imposing a duty, indeed refrain from giving the right to repress something erroneous and false? A look at the facts compels an affirmative answer. It reveals a world abounding in sin and error. God reproves them but allows them to exist. Thus the affirmation that moral and religious deviation must always be hindered because tolerance is intrinsically immoral is not absolutely and unconditionally valid.

Besides, God has not given even to human authority any such absolute and universal command either in the realm of faith or morality. Such a command is unknown to the common conviction of mankind, to the Christian conscience, to revelation or the practice of the Church. Apart from other texts of Scripture relevant to this argument, Christ in the parable of the cockle gave this advice—let the cockle grow up in the field of the world alongside the good seed because of the wheat (Matt. xiii, 24-30). Therefore the duty of repressing moral and religious deviation cannot be a final rule of action. It must clearly be subject to *higher and more general rules* which, in *certain circumstances*, allow and indeed perhaps make it appear the better thing to do, not to impede error so as to further a *greater good*.

This clarifies the two principles from which is derived the answer to the serious question on the attitude of the jurist, the statesman, and the sovereign Catholic State to a formula of religious and moral tolerance as given above for a community of States. First: what is not consonant with truth and the moral law has no objective right to existence, to dissemination or to practical realization. Secondly: to refrain from hindering this by legislation and coercion by the State can nevertheless be justified in the interest of a higher and more comprehensive good.

But the Catholic statesman's first concern must be the "question of fact"—whether this condition obtains in this actual situation. His decision will be guided by a comparison of the harm that might follow toleration with the harm the community of States might be spared by accepting this formula. Then he will be guided by the possible good that prudence and foresight indicate may accrue to the community itself and indirectly to the member-State. In matters affecting religion and morality he will also seek the judgement of the Church. And there, in questions of such moment touching international affairs, the Roman Pontiff alone is competent to judge, for Christ has committed the guidance of the whole Church to him alone.

The institution of a community of peoples has been partly realized today. Now it is a question of making it more secure and at a more advanced level. This is a real step upwards, to move from a plurality of sovereign States towards a higher unity. The Church of Christ through the mandate of her divine Founder has a similar universal mission. She has to gather in herself the men of all races and ages and form them into a religious unity. But in this case the direction is almost opposite—she goes from the higher to the lower. In the first case the higher juridical unity of the community of peoples remains to be set up. In the second instance the juridical community with its universal end, its constitution, its powers and holders of power, is already, right from the beginning, set up through the will and institution of Christ Himself. The task of this universal community from its foundation is to unite all men and all races in it (Matt. xxviii, 19) and in this way to win them completely to the truth and grace of Jesus Christ.

In fulfilling her mission the Church has always been, and still is, faced by those very problems which challenge the working of a community of sovereign States. But she feels them more deeply; she is dedicated to the mission set by her Founder Himself, a mission which goes to the heart and spirit of man. In this context conflicts are inevitable; history is witness that they have always existed, do exist, and, according to the words of our Lord, will continue till the end of time. In its mission the Church confronts every sort of people, some of high culture, others with an amazing lack of all civilization, and all imaginable intermediate grades. There are differences of race, language, philosophy, religious belief, of national ambitions and different national idiosyncrasies. Some people are free, others in slavery. Some have never belonged to the Church, and others have broken away from her communion. The Church has to live among and with them all. She can never face anyone with the assertion that she is "not interested". The command imposed by Her divine Founder makes it impossible to adopt the rule of non-intervention and *laissez-faire*. Her duty is to teach and educate according to the principles of abiding truth and goodness. And in fulfilling this duty she has to work among men and communities whose ways of thinking are worlds apart.

Let us return now to the two propositions mentioned above. And first of all, we shall deal with the proposition that condemns unconditionally what is false in religion and evil in morals. On this point the Church has never wavered or compromised and does not do so now, neither in theory nor in practice. Her standpoint has never changed throughout history. It cannot change, no matter when or

where, or under what guise the choice confronts her—to offer incense to false gods, or to shed blood for Christ. *Roma Aeterna*, the soil on which you now stand, with its relics of a great past and the memories of its glorious martyrs, is the best witness to the Church's answer. Incense did not burn before those idols; Christian blood soaked and sanctified its soil. The temples of the gods are frigid ruins, magnificent in decay perhaps, but cold, while fervent crowds at the tomb of the martyrs, people of every nation and tongue, recite the hallowed Credo of the Apostles.

Now we shall turn to the second proposition which deals with tolerance, in determined circumstances; with tolerance even when it would be possible to employ repression. Because of those who are in good conscience—in error but invincibly so—and of a different opinion, the Church has preferred to act and has acted along the lines of tolerance, the tolerance she practised for the highest and best motives after she became the State Church under Constantine and the Christian emperors. That is how she acts today; and also in the future she will be faced by the same situation. In such particular cases, the attitude of the Church is determined by her care and concern for the *bonum commune*, the common good of the Church and of the State in individual States; and also, on the other hand, for the common good of the Universal Church and of the kingdom of God over the whole world. In weighing the pros and cons of a particular question of fact, the Church knows no valid criteria except those just explained by Us for the Catholic jurist or statesman. This applies also to the final and supreme instance.

Our exposition may be useful for the jurist and the statesman both in their studies and in the practice of their professions, particularly when they come in contact with the agreements, concordats, treaties, conventions, *modus vivendi*, etc., that the Church (meaning the Apostolic See) for a long time now has concluded in the past and still negotiates with sovereign States. For the Church, concordats are an expression of the collaboration of Church and State. In principle, that is, in theory, she cannot accept the complete separation of Church and State. Concordats ought to ensure that the Church has a stable condition, both in law and in fact, in the State with which she makes the concordat. They ought also to ensure that she has complete independence in the fulfilment of her divine mission. A concordat may declare the common religious conviction of Church and State. Or it may be that the concordat, among other things, sets out to prevent disputes on questions of principle and to remove in advance all possible sources of conflict. When the Church has signed the concordat, it holds good for everything covered by

its terms. But, with the agreement of both the contracting parties, its inner meaning may admit of degrees; that is, it may give an explicit approval, or it may indicate more tolerance, on the lines of the two principles which govern the co-existence of the Church and its faithful with the powers and their adherents who hold a different belief.

BOOK REVIEWS

Franciscan Life in Christ. By Mark Stier, O.F.M.Cap., Ph.D., S.T.L.
Pp. xx + 290. (St Anthony's Guild Press, Paterson, New Jersey.
\$3.00.)

MODERN literature on St Francis is so enormous in its quantity and variety that however much we may agree or disagree with successive presentations of the theme we are compelled to admire the courage of each new contributor. The Friar Minor Press of St Anthony, Paterson, New Jersey, now comes forward with a Capuchin study of just under three hundred pages dealing with *Franciscan Life in Christ*. A Preface by the late Father Theodosius Foley, O.F.M.Cap., suggests that Father Mark Stier had an excellent sponsor if not direct inspiration in Father Foley, for the latter during his two periods as Provincial of St Joseph's Province, U.S.A., blazed a trail of intense interest in the Franciscan Ideal, ultimately publishing for wider advantage under the title "Spiritual Conferences for Religious" what were originally domestic and community exhortations.

As indicated above, there are already several kindred works, to mention but a few: Whelan's translation under the title *Franciscan Mysticism* of the *Theologia Mystica* of Boniface Maes; the *Itinerarium* of St Bonaventure published as *The Franciscan Vision* by Father James, O.F.M.Cap., and *A Franciscan View of the Spiritual and Religious Life* by Father Dominic Devas, O.F.M. All of these, and many others, labour however under the penalties of translation. Father Mark's work is an original and clear-cut presentation through the medium of the simplest and non-technical language, intelligible to all, and nestling throughout in an atmosphere of prayerful devotion. There are no controversies, no academic asides. There is just one continued piece of straight writing to be thoroughly enjoyed by those already familiar with the subject and its sources, and an excellent introduction for those who hitherto have not sought spiritual reading on Franciscan bookshelves.

Thirty pages of Preliminary Considerations (pp. 3-34) are followed by the work itself in two main parts. Among the preliminaries Father Mark indicates his Primary and Secondary Sources. The Primary Sources (pp. 5-15) show the author's patient industry and reliability. If any criticism is called for in this section it is perhaps with regard to the Secondary Sources, which appear to be rather scanty and too few. With profit some of the very fine contributions in the *Archivum Franciscanum Historicum* and the *Antonianum* might have been included, as, for instance, Lampen's *S. Franciscus Cultor Trinitatis* (A.F.H. XIV, 449-67), the same author's *De S.P. Francisci cultu angelorum et sanctorum* (A.F.H. XX, 3-23), Longpre's *La Théologie Mystique de Saint Bonaventure* (A.F.H. XIV, 36-108), and the many writings in the *Antonianum* by Father James Heerincx, O.F.M., on Franciscan Spirituality.

Part One treats of Franciscan Spirituality in general: what the Ideal of St Francis is, what are its sources, its specific characteristics, and its fruits. The major part of the book, Part Two, covers the End of Franciscan Spirituality, its Doctrinal Basis, and the Means of reaching Franciscan Life in Christ. The ordinary reader will appreciate the clear lay-out of this section, as indeed of the whole work. There is a discerning treatment of Regular Observance with its ever present problem of how to save the Ideal of Religious Life and at the same time to meet the needs of the world. The Third Order as a leaven is excellently brought out in a section on "The Franciscan Apostolate in Modern Times". Considering the Rule and example of St Francis himself it is not surprising that the Missionary Ideal is also faithfully portrayed.

It is a pity that throughout the text we have Monte Alvernia. If it is to be turned into English, why not Mount Alvernia? If it is to be left in its lovely Italian setting, then La Verna. In dealing with "Study" Father Mark refers to three tendencies among authors who discuss the mind of St Francis with regard to this question. Scholars who have studied the early sources of the Life of the Saint with an open mind have for the most part come to the conclusion that St Francis was opposed to learning. But this is to introduce precisely that note of controversy for the absence of which Father Mark's work is truly admirable. Here then is a work telling of the spirit which has brought St Francis and his sons close to Christ Crucified, and for love of Him they have carried the Cross all over the world, through virgin forests and mighty rivers, praying while preaching, doing penance while singing the Praises of the Lord, serving God and man, while ruling themselves.

JUSTIN McLOUGHLIN, O.F.M.

The Development of Christian Worship. An Outline of Liturgical History. By Dom Benedict Steuart, O.S.B. Foreword by Rev. J. B. O'Connell. Pp. 290. (Longmans. 30s.)

AFTER handling so many small popular liturgical works, all of dubious value to the serious student, it is a pleasure to welcome this scholarly study of the Holy Eucharist and the Divine Office, a study which on every page reveals the author's wide use of all the available literature, whether it be the ancient sacramentaries, or books discussing them, or fugitive articles in the learned Reviews. Amongst books the 1947 edition of Srawley's *The Early History of the Liturgy* is rightly relied upon for primitive times, and to a limited extent Jungmann's *Missarum Sollemnia* for the Roman rite. The work quoted most frequently is *The Shape of the Liturgy* by the Anglican Benedictine Gregory Dix. This excellent book is widely used by Catholics, notwithstanding certain views expressed therein which depart from the Catholic doctrinal tradition, and it is most satisfactory to find a competent liturgist such as Father Steuart to make the necessary corrections, as on pages 108 and 116, whilst retaining elsewhere what is almost the attitude of a disciple to his master.

Owing to the very involved nature of some of the points discussed, and the writer's desire to take account of every theory advanced by other scholars, the book is in certain parts very difficult reading, especially Chapter III explaining the fusion of introductory service and Eucharist, and Chapter IX on the final prayers of the Canon. We recommend readers to assimilate first of all the "Summary" concluding these chapters before studying their main portion, when most of the obscurity will be cleared away. Of matters such as the epiclesis or lack of it in the Roman Canon, Father Steuart's treatment is excellent, and full use is made of two early Latin Eucharistic prayers, published by Cardinal Mai in 1827 but almost forgotten by modern writers, which throw light on the primitive Roman anaphora before the introduction of new elements and phrases.

Even some Catholics, though not the most enlightened amongst us, think it necessary to apologize for the Canon, and a non-Catholic such as Bishop Frere speaks of the clumsy hand of its compiler and refers to certain passages as "dumps" of words. Gregory Dix, it appears, with that delightful liberty of action which has split the Establishment into a number of sects, was himself accustomed to use our Canon, probably the most sensible thing to do from his point of view: apart from a few syllables it was used by St Augustine at Canterbury when he first said Mass on our soil, used for a thousand years before the English Protestant reformers rejected the sacrifice of

the Mass, used by countless martyred Mass priests, and used still by all of us who profess the ancient Christian faith of this kingdom. Father Steuart's study will help us to appreciate the Canon more fully. With Edmund Bishop and Gregory Dix he maintains its primitive character and foresees that, in course of time, its apparent difficulties and obscurities will be fully explained.

The book is sure to be reprinted because the points discussed therein cannot be studied so fully in any other English work. When this happens, may we suggest with the greatest respect that it is worthy of a much more careful editing. Bracketed references in the text should be relegated to footnotes; more consistency and accuracy in the citation of works will add to its value: for example, "*Antiq. Eccles. Rit., Dom Martène*" as an entry in the bibliography is not helpful; and room could perhaps be found in the Appendices for the complete text of documents often cited, as has been done in Appendix V for the two prayers discovered by Cardinal Mai and for the *Deprecatio* of Pope Gelasius in Appendix IV, referred to as III on page 60.

What we should like to see most of all, in a new edition, is a reasoned definition of liturgical worship, a point which all the writers, perhaps wisely, avoid. Rightly, we think, Father Steuart describes the service of Benediction as a strictly liturgical service, because it is a public service laid down and legislated for by ecclesiastical authority. But could not the same be said, in certain contingencies at least, of the Rosary and the Stations of the Cross, which are commonly regarded as non-liturgical?

We do not know the answer to this poser, and inevitably there are many topics dealt with in the course of this valuable study on which the last word has yet to be said, or on which Father Steuart may himself give a revised judgement. In the meanwhile we are all deeply indebted to him for possessing in English, and not merely as a translation, a very imposing contribution to liturgical research.

The Holy Mass. Notes on the Liturgy. By Very Rev. E. Vandeur, O.S.B. Fifth and revised edition. Pp. 271. (Burns Oates. 15s.)

Holy Mass. Approaches to the Mystery. By A. M. Roguet, O.P. Translated by the Carisbrooke Dominicans. Pp. 120. (Blackfriars Publications. 5s. and 7s. 6d.)

THERE is now no lack of popular books on the liturgy and theology of the Mass, usually translations from the French as in these two instances. The long expected appearance of Jungmann's *Missarum Sollemnia* in an English version will eventually eclipse all smaller

commentaries on the liturgy, but the American version is prohibitive in price and not yet, we believe, completed. Meanwhile we are more than content with Father Vandeur's popular and informative book, which explains the altar and its furniture, the structure of the missal and the way in which the Roman Mass as we know it has developed in the course of many centuries. It is translated from the tenth French edition of 1946, which could not, therefore, make use of Jungmann's book; this first appeared in German in 1948. For older readers who were brought up on O'Brien's *A History of the Mass*, a book published in 1884 when the faithful were far less liturgically minded, it may be said that Vandeur's study of the subject is approximately the same in format and extent, though of course more informative and accurate in the light of knowledge accumulated during the last half century.

Father Roguet's book is not concerned with liturgy or ritual, nor even with purely theological considerations about the sacrifice of the Mass. The author presents the subject as a mystery within which the Christian people are incorporated, and his purpose is to get the reader not merely to know what he is doing when assisting at Mass but to live it and make it a vigorous element in his spiritual life. Liturgical knowledge is here, indeed, as in the explanation of the epiclesis or the lack of it, but it does not intrude. Those who, perhaps with some reason, deplore the archaeological interest which sometimes engages the mind of an ardent liturgist to the exclusion of more vital things will value Father Roguet's reflexions. The book is not easy reading but, apart from an odd word here and there, the translation is rarely obscure.

Principles of Medical Ethics. By John P. Kenny, O.P. Pp. 208. (Mercier Press. 15s.)

SOME forty years back it was your reviewer's good fortune to listen to Father Prümmer, O.P., lecturing at Fribourg, and it was his constant advice when solving medico-ethical problems that it was often better to leave doctors and nurses in good faith. In these days, however, this prudent course is impossible, even though it were desirable, since we now have a large number of books written for the medical profession in which every problem and awkward situation is more or less fully discussed. Father Kenny's book is of this character, and the theologian must bear in mind that being written for the instruction of the laity it does not go very deeply into the more difficult problems which confront a professional moralist. Nevertheless, the treatment is clear as well as being, for the most part, conservative. One would not expect to find here a full discussion, for example,

of canonical impotence, which in recent years has not been consistently and coherently presented even in Rotal judgements; but what we are given by Father Kenny should more than suffice for those to whom the book is addressed. His opinion on leucotomy, or what they prefer to call lobotomy in America, is in line with the solution gradually finding its way into the manuals, that the operation is not intrinsically wrong and may be permitted under defined conditions which are more restrictive than those usually applied to other operations. In one point the author's meaning is not quite clear. It is stated as a principle that periodic abstinence is lawful provided, amongst other things, there is no intention of perpetually excluding offspring. The Holy Father, however, in outlining the medical, eugenic, economic and social reasons which may justify the practice, has stated that these may perhaps endure for the whole of married life—which appears to contradict Father Kenny's principle.

De Bonis Ecclesiae Temporalibus. (Musaeum Lessianum n. 19.) Editio tertia recognita. Pp. 329. (Desclée de Brouwer. Fr. 180.)

VROMANT's commentaries are designed chiefly for the use of missionaries and easily hold the first place amongst books of this kind. In recording developments in the canon law since the last edition in 1934, modifications which can usually be traced to published documents, the author seems to have had access to sources of a less public nature. Thus, ever since the decree of the Consistorial, 13 July 1951, which fixed the 30,000 francs of the alienation laws at 10,000 gold francs, people have been wondering what 10,000 gold francs means in the paper currency, say, of England or America. A Roman journal recently gave what appeared to be an official determinant for about twenty countries. Vromant gives us the same, but he is able to state that the document fixing these amounts (e.g. £2,000 for England) was a *Notificatio* sent by the Consistorial to Legates of the Holy See, 18 October 1952.

On one important point most readers would like a fuller opinion from Dr Vromant. It is evident that, in missionary countries, including those which have only recently emerged from that status, the *dos* of a benefice will usually be the "voluntariae oblationes" of canon 1410, in which case there is no real distinction between *dos* and *fructus*. But, apart from this technical difficulty which has never been quite satisfactorily explained, there is another more practical one. It is that the voluntary offerings of the faithful will usually be for the support of religion in general, and not merely for the support of the parish priest. Some suggestions based on canonical principles enabling us to distinguish between what belongs to the priest as the fruits

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of his benefice and what he handles merely as the administrator of parochial revenue would be most welcome in future editions of Dr. Vromant's manual.

Familiar Prayers. By Herbert Thurston, S.J. Selected and arranged by Paul Grosjean, S.J. Pp. 200. (Burns Oates. 16s.)

THERE will be no difference of opinion on the opportuneness of this resurrection of Father Thurston's articles from *The Month* 1911-18, and indeed we are informed by the editor, Father Caraman, S.J., that the author had it in mind at the time of his death in 1939. Father Thurston's admirers in those days used to approach these articles on our familiar prayers, and still more those on our familiar devotions, with some trepidation, having first steeled themselves for the bad news that the learned author was about to disclose and break to them as gently as possible. For his investigations into the remote origins of these prayers and practices often disproved the beliefs that had been cherished by the devout faithful for centuries. But, having recovered from the shock of learning, for example, that the *Memorare* attributed to St Bernard was in matter of fact connected with the name of Claude Bernard (1588-1641), our natural disappointment was more than compensated by the wealth of facts, all verified by the author, which helped and deepened our appreciation of this favourite prayer and left us almost with the conviction that it was much more helpful to know that St Bernard was not the author.

The work of Father Grosjean in bringing these papers in line with more recent research in some particulars, and that of the editor in providing a valuable index, has been well done, and an appreciative public will look forward to the appearance of a further volume on familiar devotions. Apart from an occasional article in the *Catholic Encyclopedia*, where Father Thurston has summarized his findings on some of these topics, there is no other convenient source of information, and complete files of *The Month* are rare. Everyone will share Father Thurston's lament that there is often no one definite and official translation of popular prayers, but on the dust sheet of this volume we are promised at long last an edition of *The Manual of Prayers*, and it will contain a standard version of texts which the hierarchy desire all editors and printers to follow for the future.

Outlines of Moral Theology. By Francis J. Connell, C.S.S.R., S.T.D. Pp. 247. (Bruce Publishing Company, Milwaukee. \$3.75.)

THERE are several features of this book which will recommend it to the laity for whom it is written. In the first place, Father Connell is

one of the leading moral theologians of America and an editor of *The Ecclesiastical Review*, one of the oldest theological journals appearing in that country: only such an expert could attempt a summary in so few pages of what usually appears in three large and well-packed volumes. He has assembled his material in Part II on the basis of the Virtues rather than of the Decalogue, a positive approach used by Prümmer and other established manualists. Casuistry has been reduced to the minimum and the space thus saved has been devoted to the exposition of principles on which the solution of cases must rest.

The recurring problem confronting a writer of Father Connell's wide knowledge and experience must have been in deciding what to leave out, for on every page he could have expanded the doctrine with the greatest ease, and the clerical reader will often wish that he had done so. The book, however, is not designed as a manual for the clerical student, nor even as a *vade mecum* on the pattern of the one volume summaries of Tanquerey or Arregui. It is for the layman, and the stress is therefore on those subjects about which the layman is more likely to need information. Subjects such as contraception, the agenic period, restitution, are briefly but plainly expounded; and in the province of canon law, which largely governs any exposition of moral theology, questions such as the form of marriage or its impediments are adequately outlined. Needless to say, the writer is abreast of modern problems and developments, amongst which may be cited as one example the new rules of *Christus Dominus* on the Eucharistic Fast.

In travelling over so vast a field the theologian examining the book may discern here and there a solution with which he is not in complete agreement, but in every case Father Connell's doctrine can be supported by authority, and we would say of him what the Holy See has said of the author's patron St Alphonsus, that he has succeeded in steering a safe course between rigour and laxity.

Philosophia Moralis. Auctore Irenaeo G. Moral, S.J. Editio 3^a penitus refecta. Pp. 670. (Sal Terrae, Santander. No price indicated.)

FATHER MORAL acknowledges, with becoming modesty, that his theses are those set out by the well-known Cathrein, though expanded and developed by himself in this large volume. An examination of its contents reveals that the author is perhaps too modest in estimating his own work. The outline of Cathrein is retained indeed, but in the use made of periodical literature and in the careful attention given to modern problems this manual is much more complete than any other we have seen. There is, for example, an informative

section *De Laborismo Anglico*, based amongst other sources on Spanish translations of the writings of Mr Attlee, which concludes correctly that the words of Pius XI so often quoted "Nemo potest esse simul verus catholicus et verus socialista" refer to the Marxian type of socialism, and certainly not to the Labour Party in England. We in this country are well aware of this, but it is refreshing to find a Spanish writer equally clear in his mind. Also well argued and presented, with a keen appreciation of the political issues involved, is the author's treatment of the hunger strike—*De Ieiunio Mortifero*—in which the conclusion is correctly formulated: "hoc ieiunium incipere licitum est propter motivum proportionaliter grave, dummodo quis paratus sit ieiunium interrumpere cum grave periculum imminet. Illud vero ieiunium usque ad mortem perducere graviter illicitum videtur, nam mors propria intendi videtur ut medium ad effectum bonum obtinendum."

These two examples, from the second part of the book, suffice to show the author's competence in applying the principles of the first part: the elucidation of these principles, as always in ethical manuals, is much heavier reading. Apart from a somewhat careless proof-reading, Father Moral's manual can be strongly recommended, and will probably be of even greater utility to the moral theologian than to the moral philosopher.

Commentaire Liturgique du Catéchisme. Tome I. Les Vérités de la Foi.
Par Chan. Aug. Croegaert. Pp. 884. (Dessain. Frs. B. 165.)

THIS work, to be completed in three volumes, and conceived on the same lines as the author's *Les Rites et Prières du Saint Sacrificé de la Messe*, is meant as an aid to preparing doctrinal instructions for the faithful in general, and not merely for catechism classes to children. One notes the same meticulous division of each subject under appropriate headings, which facilitates assimilation; the use of different founts of type for stressing the relative importance of the text, a method which gives the page a curious appearance but nevertheless succeeds in its purpose; and lastly the valuable bibliography, especially of periodical literature, which accompanies each section. The basis of the author's division is naturally the Belgian catechism, to which is attached a concordance for the catechisms used in France, Switzerland and Canada: it will be perfectly simple for the English student of this book to adapt our own catechism to its contents; but those who perhaps hold our own catechism in slight regard will have no problem to face. Canon Croegaert's reputation as a liturgical scholar, and the success of his previous work on the Mass, assures his new venture a warm welcome. We do not know of

anything quite similar to it, though the number of books popularizing the liturgy is almost embarrassing. An examination of what is probably the most difficult doctrine to explain intelligibly and profitably to the people, the Blessed Trinity, will give some idea of the author's method. Within about twenty pages we are shown that this doctrine is the basis of our Christian faith; that accordingly the Church in her worship gives unceasing homage to the triune God, as in the Office, the rites of baptism, Mass, and consecration of bishops; and that Sunday is the day especially devoted to the Blessed Trinity. We must observe once more that the book has no affinity with works such as Howe's *Catechist*: not only is it designed with an adult and religiously educated audience of the faithful in view, but we imagine the clergy themselves will often find their own dogmatic theology developed and illuminated by its careful perusal.

The Rock of Truth. By Daphne Pochin Mould. Pp. 216. (Sheed & Ward. 10s. 6d.)

RECORDS of a convert's discovery of the Church are bound to repeat the motives of credibility which have moved them, and if such books are to be something more than a narration of what can be found in any work on Apologetics it is the personal life and surroundings of the author which provide their justification. In this instance the author's profession of scientist, joined to a taste for mountaineering and a native capacity for being astonished at the world's wonders, gives an arresting background to a story which can take in Edinburgh slum tenements and the passes of the Highlands of Scotland. The work is unusually free from the kind of religiosity which converts sometimes display, and it will be read and enjoyed as much for the autobiographical trimmings as for the description of a soul's journey towards the truth.

De Curia Romana. Auctore P. Ch. M. Berutti, O.P. Pp. 83.

De Missarum Satisfactione et Reductione. Auctore Fl. Romita. P. 95. (Officium Libri Catholici. Rome.)

FATHER BERUTTI's experience, both in teaching Canon Law at Fribourg and in Roman curial practice, makes him a safe guide through the intricacies of canons 242-264, the history of the Roman Congregations, Tribunals and Offices, and the limits set to the competence of each. His commentary, which is brief and to the point, does not have perhaps any special interest for the parochial clergy.

Dr Romita, on the other hand, explains in the first part of his treatise a matter which every priest has to understand: the duty of

satisfying Mass obligations, possible deviations connected with it, and the laws made by a vigilant legislator for the prevention of abuses. The second part does not usually come within the cares of a parish priest, but it is useful to know the conditions under which the Holy See may occasionally reduce the incidence of Mass obligations, usually on a principle of equity, and the current procedure in expediting this business. Readers who have access to *Ephemerides Iuris Canonici* will find Dr Romita's elucidations in successive issues of that journal 1946-1947. Most of us dislike periodical contributions in instalments unless the subject can be so divided as to make each part complete in some sense by itself, a provision which was verified in this instance. It is convenient, nevertheless, to have them within one cover, particularly as a good index has been compiled for the reprint.

Westminster Year Book 1954. Pp. 104. (Burns Oates. 1s. 6d.) *Lancaster Diocesan Directory*. Pp. 208. (Hoxton & Walsh, Manchester. 9d.)

SEPARATE books for the larger dioceses have become a necessity, notwithstanding the wide net thrown by the *Catholic Directory*, owing to the amount of information which is important within the diocese though sometimes less so to the country at large. Useful features in the Westminster book are the list of foreign chaplains in the diocese and the summary of the new rules on the Eucharistic fast; the Lancaster directory contains illustrations of churches and other buildings newly erected; and both give the necessary information about civil marriage formalities.

E. J. M.

CORRESPONDENCE

CONFESSION AT THE RECEPTION OF A CONVERT

The Rev. P. J. O'Mahony writes:

The answer of the late Canon Mahoney regarding the procedure and time of confession at a convert's reception raises another important point.

It seems strange that a convert who is baptized conditionally *must* confess all the mortal sins of his past life. The fact that he is obliged to probe into the past causes many doubts and fears. There

is also a possibility that he will judge his past life by his present knowledge and frequently the convert wonders if he has really made a good confession. In some cases the dread of a general confession will prevent a likely neophyte from embracing the faith. In other cases the multitude of sin causes grave anxiety and shame, which might result in a bad confession. Moreover, the priest can experience embarrassment as well as the penitent, especially in places where another Confessor is not available. Why impose an obligation which makes the reception ceremony a time of fear rather than of joy?

If the convert is baptized conditionally it follows that the obligation to confess is doubtful and hence it does not exist. Why then does the *Ordo Administrandi* make it a definite obligation? The late Canon Mahoney states that this law does not exist in some parts of the Church. It seems a pity that it should bind in England where converts are so numerous. Surely it is most difficult to explain to an English convert that although he is bound to undergo this most difficult ordeal, nevertheless his fellow-converts are not obliged in other lands.

One of the arguments in favour of the present procedure is that the convert will have a more complete assurance that his sins are remitted (*Questions and Answers. The Sacraments. Question 24*). However, this assurance can still be obtained without the obligation of a general confession. He is still capable of making this type of confession whenever and wherever he subsequently chooses.

I know many priests who would welcome a change of ruling in this ceremony. Perhaps a petition to this effect could be sent to the authorities. It seems that any good effects which accrue from the present procedure could be obtained equally well from another which is motivated by freedom rather than obligation.

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